



ENTERTAINMENT

HOLLYWOOD

BOLLYWOOD

SOUTH INDIAN

MUSIC

OTT

From Dubai to Vienna: Young musicians make history on the world's classical stage

The young musicians also took part in masterclasses, training sessions and

Last updated: July 08, 2026 | 16:22

Gulf News

3 MIN READ



Follow us +



For the young performers, it was a chance to place Dubai's growing creative scene on a global stage.

A group of young musicians from Dubai has struck a historic chord on one of the world's most prestigious classical [music](#) stages.

The National Youth Orchestra Dubai's Strings Camerata Orchestra has returned from its first international tour with a major achievement — securing third place at the 18th Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival in Vienna, while becoming the first UAE-based orchestra to perform at some of Austria's most iconic concert halls.

Supported by Dubai Culture through its Dubai Cultural Grant programme, the orchestra's landmark Vienna journey saw its young musicians perform at celebrated venues including the legendary Golden Hall of the Musikverein, the Wiener Konzerthaus and the ORF RadioKulturhaus — spaces that have hosted some of the greatest names in classical music.

For the young performers, it was a chance to place Dubai's growing creative scene on a global stage.

A UAE sound takes centre stage

The orchestra opened its festival journey with a special world premiere — 'Threads of Light' by Emirati composer Ihab Darwish, Founder and Chairman of the Emirates Musicians' Association.

Inspired by themes of unity, hope and the collective voice of youth, the composition showcased Emirati creativity through a universal language: music.

Under the musical direction of conductors Jonathan Barrett and Eva Gräsbeck, NYO Dubai's Strings Camerata competed against youth orchestras from around the world before an international jury, earning third place in the prestigious competition held at the Musikverein's Golden Hall.

The achievement marked a proud moment for Dubai's young musicians, who represented the UAE in one of the world's most celebrated capitals of classical music.

Beyond the concert hall

The Vienna experience was not only about performances. The young musicians also took part in masterclasses, training sessions and workshops with internationally recognised maestros including Saul Zaks and Alexander Grandé, gaining insights and techniques from leading figures in the field.

The programme also gave the orchestra a chance to explore Vienna's rich cultural heritage, with visits to institutions such as the Haus der Musik and the Kunsthistorisches Museum, where they discovered the city's deep connection with musical legends and historic instruments.

The delegation also visited the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna (MDW), where members participated in the String Music Lab, organised in collaboration with renowned string manufacturer Thomastik-Infeld.

'What becomes possible when talent is believed in'

Amira Fouad, Artistic Director of the National Youth Orchestra Dubai, described the Vienna performances as a moment she would never forget.

"To bring the National Youth Orchestra Dubai to Vienna and to see our musicians perform at the Golden Hall of the Musikverein, the Vienna Konzerthaus, and the Radio Kulturhaus as the first orchestra from the UAE ever to do so, is something I will carry with me for the rest of my life," she said.

"This week has shown what our young musicians are truly capable of and what becomes possible when that talent is nurtured and believed in."

Fouad also praised the musicians, conductors and supporters behind the achievement, saying the orchestra's success reflected the dedication and excellence of everyone involved.

Building Dubai's next generation of artists

Shaima Rashed Al Suwaidi, CEO of the Arts, Design and Literature Sector at Dubai Culture, said the milestone reflected Dubai's commitment to developing the music sector and creating opportunities for young talent.

"What the National Youth Orchestra Dubai has achieved during its Vienna tour reflects Dubai Culture's commitment to supporting the music sector, empowering local talent, and enabling young musicians to reach some of the world's leading artistic platforms," she said.

She added that the achievement highlighted the importance of investing in music education and nurturing a generation capable of representing the UAE internationally.

The Summa Cum Laude International Youth Music Festival, held annually in Vienna under the patronage of Austria's Federal President and the Austrian Commission for UNESCO, brings together young musicians from across the world for performances, cultural exchange and collaboration.

For NYO Dubai, the Vienna debut has created a new chapter — one where Dubai's young musicians are no longer just learning from the world's great stages, but stepping onto them and making their own mark.

Also In This Package

Dubai Opera hosts Sing for the Nation



Honouring those who protect the UAE - through music



Get Updates on Topics You Choose



☐ Daily Updates

☐ Finance

☐ Business

☐ Weekend

☐ Sport

☐ Ask Gulf News

☐ Luxury Travel

☐ Editor's Message

Email address

By signing up, you agree to our [Privacy Policy](#) and [Terms of Use](#).

GET UPDATES

RELATED STORIES



How Olga Trifonova' is redefining luxury events in UAE

4m read



UAE launches Global Youth Water Envoys programme

2m read



EWEC invests in youth to power UAE's green future

2m read



Emirati musicians head to Vienna stage making history

3m read

TRENDING STORIES

UPDATE

Trump says US has 'mine-swept entire' Strait of Hormuz

Rishabh Pant wants to return home, CM promises help

2m read