



ARTS &amp; CULTURE

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## Symphony Tacoma director Sarah Ioannides attends World Culture Summit

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The first World Culture Summit is taking place this week in Abu Dhabi, and among the 300 participants from 80 countries is Sarah Ioannides, music director of Symphony Tacoma.

Ioannides is the only female conductor of a professional orchestra in the United States invited to the summit hosted by the United Arab Emirates. The goal of the summit is bringing diverse cultural leaders together to brainstorm how to solve world challenges through the arts.

“I am finding the summit extremely positive and highly engaging and stimulating thus far,” said Ioannides via email this week. “There are many powerful and unique stories of artists and cultures being shared, healthy discussions about the state of the arts, and today we began to formulate the questions we want to ask and to resolve as a group ... to tackle key issues our world now faces.”

Virtual delegates and those at the five-day summit include a range of artistic, political and social leaders: former U.S. secretary of state Madeleine Albright, youth orchestra organization El Sistema, the producers of Sesame Street, composer Tan Dun, choreographer Liz Lerman, artist Idris Khan, cellist Maya Beiser, classical Indian singer Falu, rapper Young Paris, plus directors from major international arts venues and educational institutions.

Prior to attending, Ioannides consulted with Tacoma leaders such as Mayor Marilyn Strickland and arts administrator Amy McBride about how to best represent Tacoma's own issues and make beneficial connections. She'll be presenting on the orchestra's May concert, which includes a commission from New York composer and Puyallup native Daniel Ott about the melting of glaciers on Mount Rainier. The piece is also a collaboration with the Museum of Glass.

Issues addressed by the summit include environmental problems, social displacement, effects of war and social injustice, said Ioannides.

"It is certainly among the most diverse group of arts and culture representatives I have had opportunity to engage in, creating heated and vibrant discussions now at every opportunity and every angle in a very special and unique setting," said the conductor.

For more information and live Facebook sessions, visit [culturesummitabudhabi.com](http://culturesummitabudhabi.com).

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