



**Media Contacts:**

For additional information, Libby Mark or Heather Meltzer at Bow Bridge Communications, LLC  
New York City; +1 347-460-5566; [info@bow-bridge.com](mailto:info@bow-bridge.com)

**INTERNATIONAL FESTIVAL OF ARTS & IDEAS JOINS  
GLOBAL CULTURAL DISTRICTS NETWORK**

**Festival becomes member of singular federation of global centers for arts and culture**

*December XX, 2015*....The International Festival of Arts & Ideas (Arts & Ideas), in New Haven, CT, announced that it has been invited to join the Global Cultural Districts Network (GCDN), a federation of global centers of arts and culture. GCDN's mission is to foster co-operation and knowledge-sharing among those responsible for conceiving, funding, building, and operating cultural districts and to help to ensure that these projects are vital assets for their communities, contributing to the vitality of 21<sup>st</sup>-century cities. GCDN supports the leaders of cultural districts—both planned and existing—internationally.

Including Arts & Ideas, GCDN founding members are:

- Alserkal Avenue in Dubai, United Arab Emirates,
- Barbican Centre and Museum of London in London, England,
- Barangaroo Delivery Authority in Sydney, Australia,
- Brooklyn Cultural District and Brooklyn Academy of Music in New York City, USA,
- City of Sydney, Australia,
- Dallas Arts District in Dallas, Texas, USA,
- Grand Center in St. Louis, Missouri, USA,
- New World Symphony in Miami, Florida, USA,
- Quartier des Spectacles Partnership in Montreal, Quebec, Canada,
- Sharjah Museums Department in Sharjah, United Arab Emirates,
- University Circle in Cleveland, Ohio, USA, and
- West Kowloon Cultural District in Hong Kong, China.

Mary Lou Aleskie, IFAI Executive Director, said, “The Festival, celebrating its 21<sup>st</sup> season in June 2016, with another spectacular line-up, is thrilled to be a part of this distinguished international group of creative placemakers. It’s a perfect fit! The Festival has become an integral part of the Connecticut experience for residents and visitors and a highly anticipated event for our audiences, speakers, and performers. Like other thriving cultural districts around the world, the Festival contributes tangibly to the region’s economic development—making it a place where people want to live, work, and play and establishing it as a vibrant cultural destination. As we continue to bring artists and thought-leaders from across the globe for the enjoyment and edification of our community, GCDN will be an invaluable resource for ensuring the Festival’s ongoing growth and success.”

## **About the International Festival of Arts & Ideas**

The International Festival of Arts & Ideas is a year-round organization that culminates with an annual celebration of performing arts, lectures, and conversations each June in New Haven, CT. The Festival convenes leading artists, thought-leaders, and innovators from around the world for fifteen days of dynamic public programs to engage, entertain, and inspire a diversity of communities. More than 80% of Festival programs are free to the public, including events that feature some of the most influential jazz, classical, dance, and theater artists of our time. The Festival takes place in venues and open spaces in downtown New Haven, in the heart of the northeast corridor, two and a half hours south of Boston and ninety minutes north of New York City.

The Festival's programs have an impact throughout the year and include additional performances, educational opportunities, and the annual Visionary Leadership Award.

The Festival was established in 1996 by Anne Calabresi, Jean Handley, and Roslyn Meyer. They envisioned an annual celebration in New Haven—a city steeped in a rich array of cultural and educational traditions—distinguished from other arts festivals by its fusion of the arts with events centered on sharing ideas.

The Festival is presented with major support from the Connecticut Office of the Arts, as well as marquee sponsors Yale University, The Community Foundation for Greater New Haven, First Niagara, Comcast, and the National Endowment for the Arts. [www.artidea.org](http://www.artidea.org)

## **About the Global Cultural Districts Network**

GCDN conducts research on: creative placemaking, public policy, best practices, innovative programming, audience development, cultural tourism, trends in technology, and strategies for sustaining creative industries and ensuring they play a central role in their communities.

Members participate in regular forums to hear from experts, share information with their peers, and discuss opportunities and challenges.

GCDN has identified a common agenda for cultural districts internationally, including:

- Content and programming strategies;
- Development of strategic alliances to share content;
- Cultural project management;
- Segmented strategies for development of key audience groups and subsequent marketing (local communities, tourists);
- Marketing, branding, and identity;
- Development of education and outreach programs that enable meaningful relationships between the cultural districts and the wider communities in which they are located; and
- Recruitment and training of staff across a range of operational skills, and in particular, curatorial, programming, production, customer service and front of house, and fundraising; and
- Effective integration of technology.

GCDN was established in 2014, by the New Cities Foundation, AEA Consulting, and the Dallas Arts District.