

# Qatar Highlights

## Art Scene of Qatar



### The Consulate General of the State of Qatar in Hong Kong

Special Newsletter Edition

July 2021

Qatar National Museum



## Farewell Note by the Consul General of the State of Qatar

*Dear friends, colleagues, partners, ladies, and gentlemen,*

*It is with a heavy heart that I take this opportunity to bid farewell to you all upon the completion of my tour of duty in the Hong Kong SAR.*

*The past two and a half years will forever be engraved in my memory with all their achievements and milestones. It's been truly an honour to have served my country spending those years alongside you.*

*I am eternally grateful for all the friendships and acquaintances I made in Hong Kong, and as I head to a new chapter, I'm happy to leave you once again with the pages of our Newsletter.*

*For the last Newsletter I will be overseeing before my departure, I have chosen to shed light on the Art Scene in the State of Qatar, giving you a glimpse of the numerous state-of-the-art museums and galleries my home country prides itself in, reflecting on its heritage while also amplifying its modern soul. I hope you enjoy this read.*

*My heartiest wishes for best of luck and prosperity to you all, I leave you in the care of Allah almighty, in the hope our paths would cross again.*

*Yours faithfully,*

*Mohammed Al Kuwari*



Mohammed Sultan Al Kuwari  
Consul General

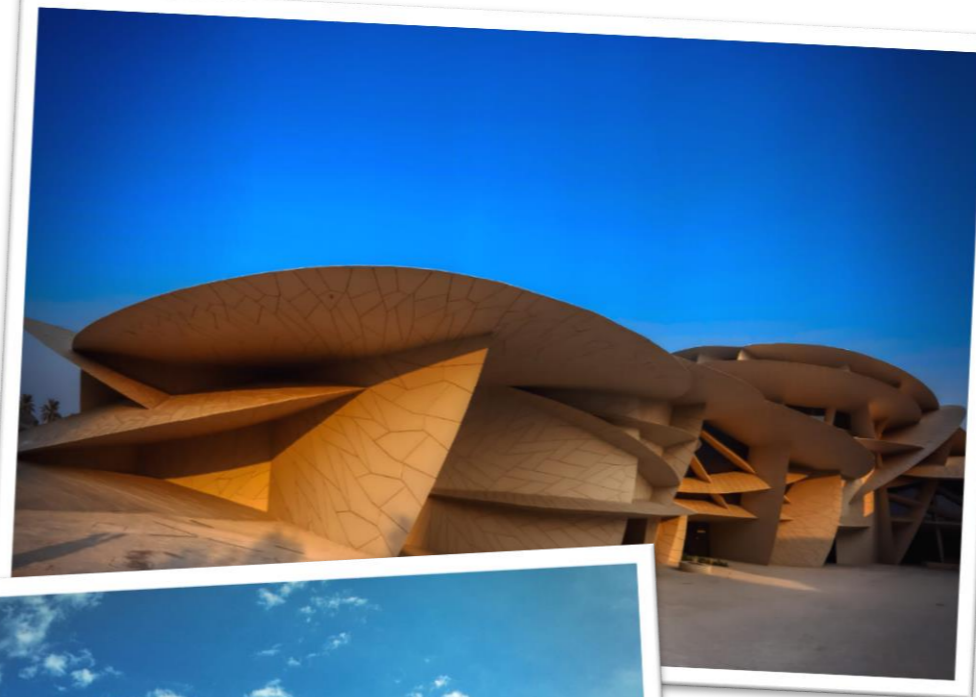
# Arts in Qatar

Art is serious business in Qatar.

Qatar is officially the world's biggest art buyer. Over the last six years Qatar has been buying art at a level never seen before and is responsible for the bulk of all modern art purchases worldwide.

This is in line with the aim to make Qatar the cultural capital of the Middle East, and a hub for regional cultural tourism.

The rapid growth of this cultural portfolio is set on course for the influx of the world to Qatari shores with the 2022 FIFA World Cup and is already evident on arrival at Hamad International Airport (HIA), with the passenger terminals showcasing a varied selection of local and international art, curated by Qatar Museums Authority. As well as Qatar Museums Authority's showcase museums, Qatar is host to a burgeoning arts culture, with Doha Film Institute developing and promoting regional and international film makers, Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra bringing symphonic music to the region, galleries both privately owned or under government sponsorship, classes and workshops available from fashion and fine arts to dance and drumming.



## What are we covering in this issue?

- ❖ Qatar Museums Authority
- ❖ Qatar National Museum
- ❖ Museum of Islamic Art
- ❖ Arab Museum of Modern Art
- ❖ Galleries and Art Spaces
- ❖ Public Art
- ❖ Film Festivals and Orchestra
- ❖ Katara Art





# Qatar Museums Authority

Qatar Museums Authority connects the museums, cultural institutions and heritage sites in Qatar and creates the conditions for them to thrive and flourish. It centralizes resources and provides a comprehensive organization for the development of museums and cultural projects, with a long term ambition of creating a strong and sustainable cultural infrastructure for Qatar. Under the patronage of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamid Al-Thani, and led by its Chairperson, Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, QM is consolidating Qatar's efforts to become a vibrant center for the arts, culture and education, in the Middle East and beyond.

## Qatar Museums' Main Missions

### Managing Museums

Qatar Museums offers sweeping array of arts and culture experiences.

It manages Qatar's most iconic museums and galleries in Qatar and links them to other international art hubs.

It also manages the publication of award-winning books, and the public art all around Qatar.

### Archaeology and Heritage

The Archaeology and architectural conservation departments manage, conserve, and protect archaeology and archaeological practices in Qatar.

The archaeology team works in other parts of the world too, and welcomes specialists from other parts of the world, hold conferences and engage in international projects.

### Education

Qatar Museums offers education programmes to provide interactive opportunities through custom-made workshops and classes for educators and teachers, with other learning opportunities for families and children.

## Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani



*“We are changing our culture from within, but at the same time we are reconnecting with our traditions. It is important for us to grow organically.”*

Sheikha Al Mayassa Bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani is engaged in the fields of formal and informal education. She is Chairperson of Qatar Museums, Doha Film Institute, Reach Out to Asia, and Qatar Leadership Centre. In having the privilege to serve her country in multiple fields – among them culture, leadership, education, and philanthropy – she has been able to facilitate conversations across borders and fields.

Her current interests are in human development, cultural regionalism, environmental stewardship and sustainability, and economic growth using culture as a catalyst for education, dialogue, and exchange. Through her public work and support of the Qatar Vision 2030, she is building an exciting creative future for the country that will connect artistic communities in all areas of culture.

# Qatar Museum of Islamic Art

The Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) houses one of the most comprehensive collections of Islamic art in the world, with masterpieces from every corner of the globe representing the diversity found in Islamic heritage.

Designed by world-renowned architect I.M. Pei, the MIA building has become an icon of the Doha skyline.

Sitting across the water from the spectacular skyline of West Bay, it draws influence from traditional Islamic architecture. The building is made from limestone, which captures hourly changes in light and shade.

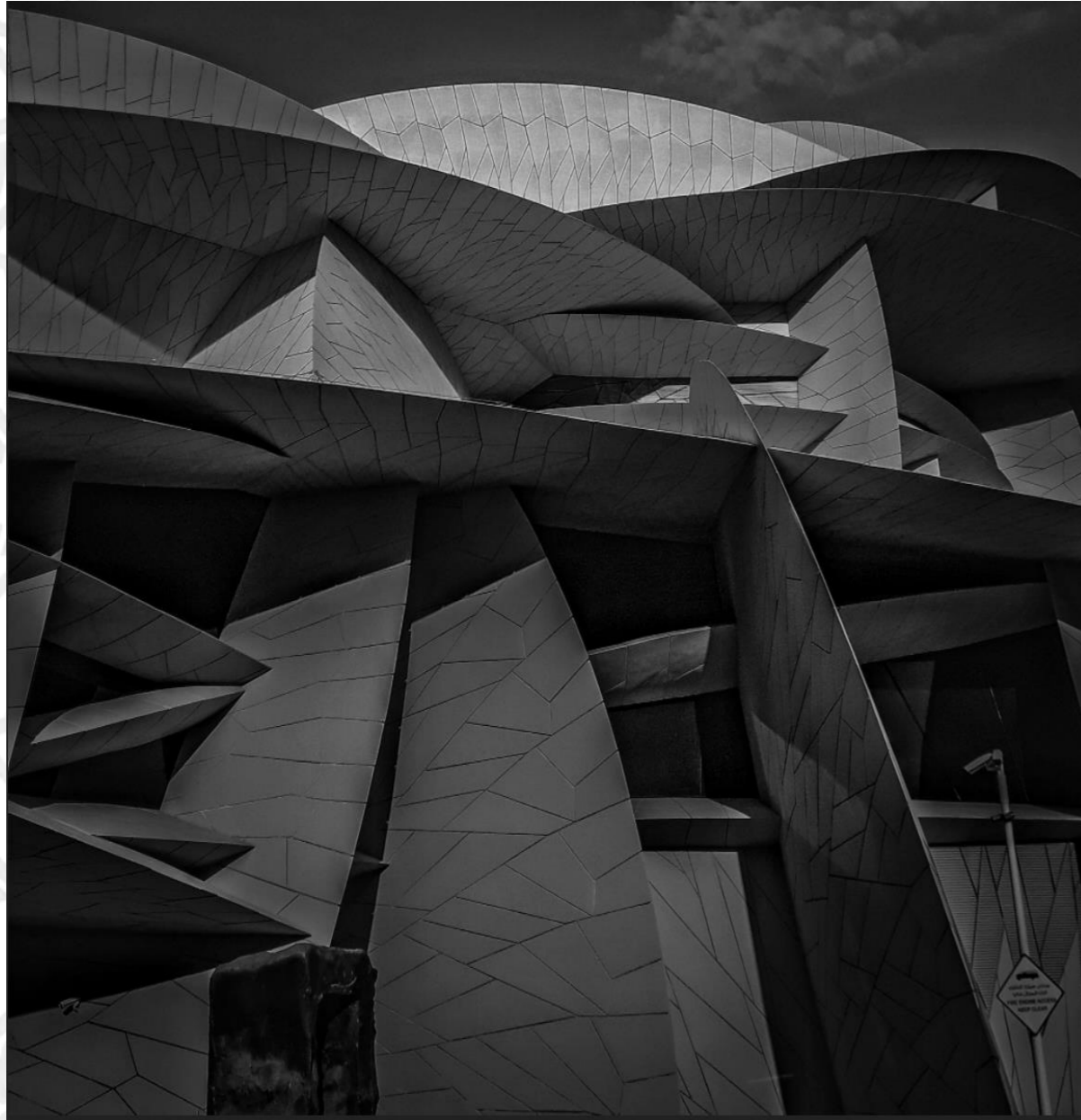
The geometric patterns of the Islamic world adorn the inside space, making for a grand interior. A variety of textures and materials, including wood and stone, have created a unique environment for the museum's stunning collections. With incredible views across the bay, it's a central part of Doha's burgeoning cultural scene.

*“MIA’s collection celebrates the great legacy of the Islamic world and its contribution to global heritage.”*

- Dr Julia Gonnella, Director, Museum of Islamic Art



# National Museum of Qatar (NMOQ)



The National Museum of Qatar (NMoQ) is dedicated to bringing to life the story of Qatar and its people. It actively gives voice to the nation's rich heritage and culture and demonstrates Qatar's extensive network of ties with other nations and people around the world. Designed to be vibrant and immersive, the museum is a space where diverse communities can come together and experience Qatar's past, present and future.

NMoQ's iconic building, which was designed by French architect Jean Nouvel, made a dramatic addition to the Doha landscape when it opened in 2019.

In addition to the unique architecture and stunning gallery spaces, the museum features a 220-seat auditorium, two restaurants, a café, and a traditional food forum.

For scholars and students, the museum offers a new research centre and laboratories along with access to digital archives. The Park at NMoQ also provides visitors with a chance to explore and learn about Qatar's indigenous plants and their role in Qatari culture.



“We wanted to create a museum of the past, the present and the future. This is the essence of the narrative and the experience of the museum.”

- Sheikha Amna bint Abdulaziz bin Jassim Al Thani, Director of the National Museum of Qatar

# MATHAF

## Arab Museum of Modern Art

Mathaf is a boundary-breaking museum that invites visitors to celebrate the creativity of the contemporary Arab world. Its spaces are designed to be used, not just visited. Beyond its galleries, Mathaf brings people together to learn, share ideas and enter debate. From groundbreaking exhibitions to engaging conversations with artists to a creative internship programme, Mathaf creates opportunities for everyone to deepen their relationship with art of our time.

*“Our challenge is to open dialogue through art, without making it confrontational.”*

*-Abdellah Karoum, Director, Mathaf*



# Galleries and Art Spaces in Qatar

**Al Riwaq Art Space** is a non-profit space supporting contemporary art practice established in 1998, to promote creativity and art value providing exhibition space to emerging and established artists, both local and international.

Based in MIA grounds this huge gallery space hosts regular exhibitions of both regional and international artists such as Damien Hirst and Takashi Murakami, under the premise of 'art to spark debate'.



**Al Markhiya Gallery** represents a collection of talented emerging and established contemporary Arab artists from Qatar, the wider Arab region and throughout the world.

The gallery seeks out partnerships and collaborative opportunities with other major galleries globally.

Their professional network provides for the exchanges of exhibitions and increases exposure for local and regional talent.

## **Fire Station: Artists in Residence**

Artist in Residence is an annual nine-month residency program, from September to June, where artists are given studio space in one of the five floors of the Fire Station building. The residency is an opportunity for artists residing in Qatar to develop their art practice through the program, which includes mentorship, working with curators, open studios and access to the building's facilities (fabrication lab, woodshop and exhibition spaces).

The new Fire Station building provides 24 studios and a gallery space for exhibition and community interaction;

## **Fire Station: Artists in Residence**





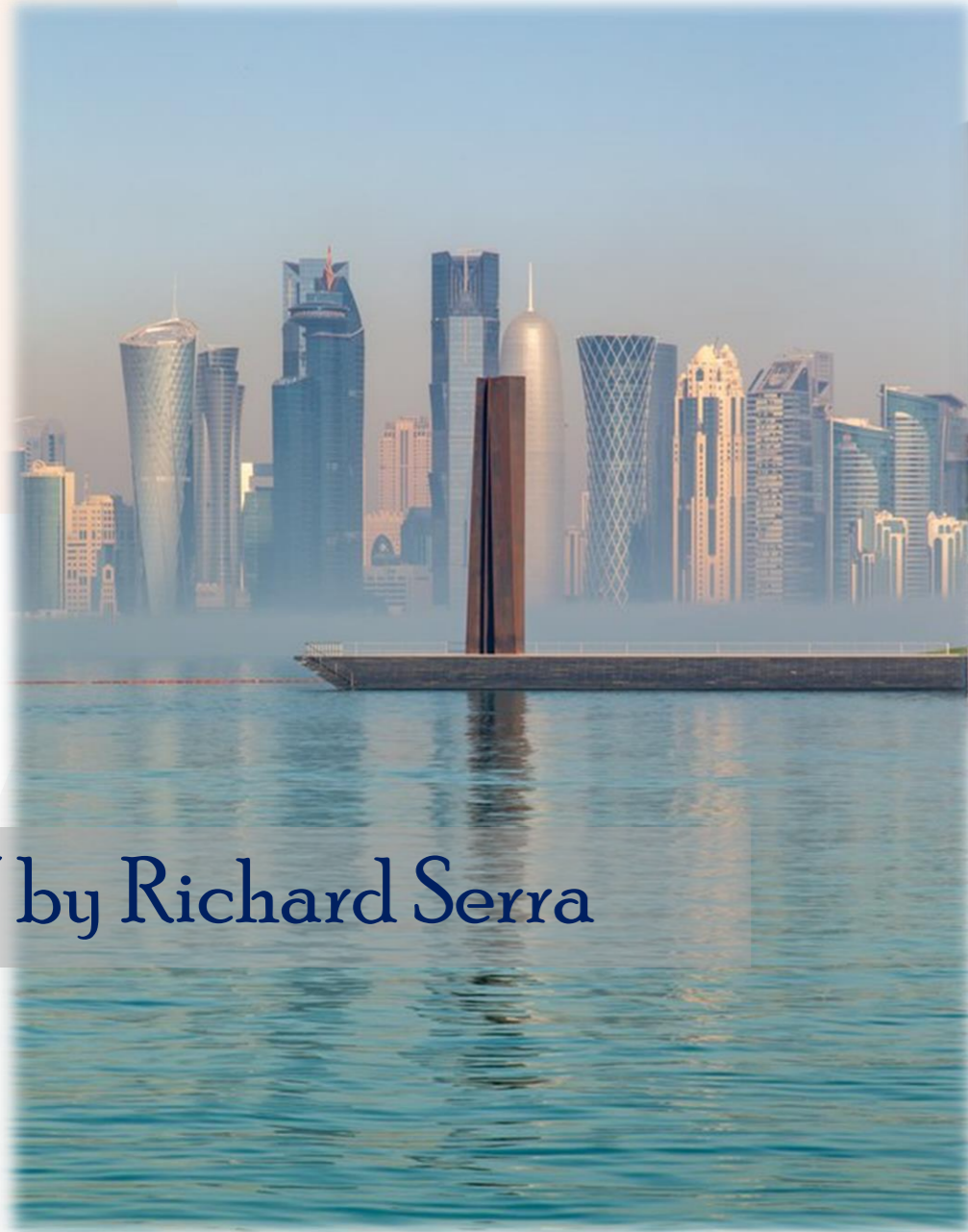
# Public Art

Qatar Museums has been spreading international and local art publically all over Qatar, with the aim to inspire local talent and establish an organic connection between art and the local community. Here's some of the most substantial pieces of public art on public display in Qatar.

Lamp Bear by Urs Fischer at HIA



Gandhi's Three Monkeys by Subodh



7 by Richard Serra



The Miraculous Journey by Damien Hirst

# Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO)

Established to bring symphonic music to the region, but, also be a platform for music from all over the world. **Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra** celebrates both western and Arabic music. Part of the orchestra's mandate is to host new and established composer's, conductor's and soloists from the Arab world.

QPO has at least forty programmes a year both at its home in Katara Opera House and abroad on tour.

Founded in 2007, the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra was a personal initiative of H.H. Sheikha Moza bint Nasser. In its first years, it was greatly supported by Maestro Lorin Maazel who helped heighten international awareness during a large number of tours to Europa and the US. Artistic partnerships with Gerd Albrecht, Marc Minkowski, Dmitri Kitayenko or first-class singers like Roberto Alagna and Angela Gheorghiu further contributed to its artistic development.



# Doha Film Institute



Based in Katara Cultural Village, **Doha Film Institute** seeks to create a culture of film appreciation within Qatar and the region by creating an all-encompassing film hub. Their motto 'Film is Life' is about using film as part of the culture, community as well as for education and entertainment.

DFI aims to nurture and develop local and regional storytellers, but within a global context and scope. DFI hosts several festivals and has regular screenings.

Doha Film Institute is Qatar's first international organisation dedicated to film financing, production, education and the Film Festivals, established in 2010 by Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al-Thani to support the growth of the local film community.

# Katara Art

Katara Cultural Village is the largest multidimensional cultural project in Qatar, aspiring to create diverse interaction through art and cultural exchange. It houses:

- ❖ The Masjid of Katara
- ❖ The Pigeon Towers
- ❖ Amphitheatre
- ❖ Katara's Gardens & Katara Hills Promenade
- ❖ Katara Opera House
- ❖ Drama Theatre
- ❖ Halls & Galleries
- ❖ Al Thuraya Planetarium
- ❖ Public Art installations and murals, like:
  - ❁ Oryx Going Ahead
  - ❁ The Force of Nature
  - ❁ Gandhi's Three Monkeys



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katara

## Katara Art Centre

Founded in 2011 by Tariq Al Jaidah in the iconic and unique Katara Village (Building 5 - Next to the Amphitheater), the KAC is a cultural hub that has been developed to provide a creative ecosystem that goes beyond the typical standards of art, design and culture. It has its own spirit, identity and creative heart.

The KAC is also an art incubator that strengthens the cultural branding of Qatar by helping artists to grow and hosting art events and concepts, shaping Katara Village as one of the leading spots of design, art and culture within the Middle East. They developed many events with world class brands such as Sotheby's.

## Katara Cultural Village

**Katara Cultural Village** is a place where people come together to experience the cultures of the world. With beautiful theatres, concert halls, exhibition galleries and cutting-edge facilities, Katara aims to become a world leader for multi-cultural activities.

In line with the goals set forward by the Qatar National Vision 2030, Katara serves as a guardian to the heritage and traditions of Qatar and endeavours to spread awareness about the importance of every culture and civilization and as such, Katara hosts international, regional and local festivals, workshops, performances and exhibitions.



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