

Qatar's Years of Culture Initiative Extends Qatar-Indonesia Cultural Ties through New Ceramic Residency

An Indonesian ceramic artist brings cross-cultural craft and community workshops to Doha as part of the Qatar-Indonesia 2023 Year of Culture legacy programming

29 July 2025 – Doha, Qatar – Qatar's Years of Culture initiative is set to build on the legacy of the Qatar-Indonesia 2023 Year of Culture with the launch of a new Ceramic Residency Project, welcoming renowned Indonesian ceramic artist **Francisca "Kika"** to Doha this August.

Hosted in collaboration with Liwan Design Studios and Labs, the residency continues to promote cultural exchange and creative dialogue between Qatar and Indonesia, featuring the shared values of craftsmanship, community and artistic innovation. Running from 4 August to 7 September 2025, the programme will see Kika working side by side with local artists and craftspeople to develop a series of collaborative ceramic works inspired by the craft legacies of both Qatar and Indonesia.

Francisca, widely known as **Kika**, is an Indonesian ceramicist recognised for blending contemporary forms with a strong sense of community. She previously led the popular *Indonesian Workshop Month* in Qatar during the 2023 Year of Culture, where she invited participants to sculpt their own creations and discover new ceramic-making techniques. Her interactive, inclusive approach demystifies traditional craft and welcomes the public to connect with clay as a medium for storytelling and cultural exchange.

A core part of this new project is public engagement, with weekly Pottery Fun Classes welcoming community members to learn directly from Kika every Friday — on **8, 15, 22, 29 August and 5 September**. Participants will explore hand-building and pottery wheel techniques while contributing to the creation of works that celebrate the cultural connections at the heart of this residency.

The Ceramic Residency embodies the spirit of friendship and artistic dialogue that the Years of Culture programme champions. By bringing communities together through craft and collaboration, the project reinforces the enduring legacy of the Qatar-Indonesia 2023 Year of Culture and its commitment to building connections that extend far beyond a single year. The residency will conclude with a group exhibition, celebrating the artworks created and the stories shared throughout this cultural exchange.

For updates, follow Years of Culture on social media or visit the website at yearsofculture.qa.

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About Years of Culture

The Years of Culture initiative, chaired by Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, spearheads long-lasting cultural partnerships between Qatar and other nations. It exists to promote respect and understanding among diverse cultures and serves as a catalyst for bringing people together, nurturing connections, encouraging dialogue, and deepening understanding. At its heart, Years of Culture celebrates the power of cultural exchange, which enriches Qatar's ties with partner countries beyond the dedicated year.

Each year is organised with support from Qatar and partner countries' cultural institutions, ministries, foundations, and private and public sector partners, with assistance from Embassies in Qatar and abroad. Programmes are tailored to explore the unique nature of each partner country with a focus on cultural heritage, creative industries, social and economic development, and innovation.

Previous Years of Culture have included: Qatar-Japan 2012, Qatar-UK 2013, Qatar-Brazil 2014, Qatar-Türkiye 2015, Qatar-China 2016, Qatar-Germany 2017, Qatar-Russia 2018, Qatar-India 2019, Qatar-France 2020, Qatar-USA 2021, Qatar-MENASA 2022, Qatar-Indonesia 2023, and Qatar-Morocco 2024.

About Liwan Design Studios and Labs

Liwan Design Studios and Labs, part of Qatar Museums Creative Hubs, is a membership space dedicated to supporting and connecting Qatar's burgeoning creative community. It provides designers who join as members with state-of-the-art labs for pottery, leatherworking, digital photography, prototyping, coworking, and shared studios.

Through its robust schedule of public programs featuring leading local and international creatives, audiences can participate in stimulating commentary on important cultural and intellectual matters surrounding design. Liwan publishes *AI Journal*, an online collection of essays, articles, book and exhibition reviews and visuals exploring contemporary design themes across the Middle East and beyond. There is also an archive library housing a collection of roughly 850 archived children's books and objects belonging to the former school where Liwan currently resides. On display are old children's storybooks showcasing some of the best late 20th-century typography, illustration, and design from the Arab world.

Located in the heart of Msheireb Downtown, Doha's ambitious new design district, Liwan is housed in an imaginatively repurposed historic building that was the first officially recognized school for girls in Qatar, founded by education pioneer Amna Mahmoud Al Jaida. The original school, Banat El Doha (renamed Umm Almo'mneen Primary School), opened in the late 1950s. It is a landmark institution in local history and pays tribute to Qatar's architectural, social, and educational history. It also hosts a permanent exhibition to honor the legacy of Amna Mahmoud Al Jaida. Liwan is led by multidisciplinary Qatari designer Aisha Bint Nasser Al Sowaidi as its director.

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Years of Culture

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