

The “Years of Culture” programme connected Qatar and Chile through JEDARIART in Valdivia

19 November 2025 – Doha, Qatar: Two Qatari artists completed collaborative murals at the School of Architecture of the Austral University of Chile (UACH) in Valdivia, as part of the 2025 international “Years of Culture” programme. The initiative was part of JEDARIART, a project that promotes cultural dialogue and the reimagining of public spaces through mural art.

JEDARIART is a programme launched in 2020 by Qatar Museums to beautify public spaces with murals created by both local and international artists. Since its first edition, the project has expanded to include interventions in U.S. cities, collaborations with collectives from India and Pakistan, and community activities with schoolchildren. Each edition invites new artists to submit original mural designs, cementing JEDARIART as a global platform that celebrates creativity, cultural diversity, and the transformation of urban spaces.

Over a week of work, from 7 to 14 of November, artists Mubarak Al Malik and Aisha Al-Fadhala created murals that expressed the connection between Qatari and Chilean cultures, accompanied by students from UACH’s Architecture and Visual Arts programs.

The project, organised by Years of Culture in partnership with George Mason University, the Austral University of Chile, and the Institute of Public Art (IPA), was an experience that combined art, education, and cultural diplomacy.

“It was very special to bring a piece of Qatar to Chile and see how people became interested in our story. My mural blends traditional symbols, such as the batula—which represents motherhood and home in our culture, with elements of the Chilean landscape, like the copihue flower. It is a visual conversation between two worlds,” said Mubarak Al Malik, one of the participating muralists.

For her part, Aisha Al-Fadhala highlighted the warmth of the local reception. “My experience in Valdivia was incredible. I was welcomed by a rainstorm and many smiles. Painting here allowed me to discover a unique nature, full of colour and life. In my mural, I wanted to merge the beauty of Valdivia with symbols from my country, such as a Qatari woman enjoying Arabic coffee among the flowers of southern Chile,” the artist said.

The artistic exchange is part of the 2025 edition of Years of Culture, a programme that this year partners Qatar with Chile and Argentina, promoting mutual understanding through creativity. Since its creation in 2012, Years of Culture has supported projects in various disciplines, heritage, creative industries, innovation and social and economic development, strengthening cultural and diplomatic ties between Qatar and countries around the world.

“That Valdivia was chosen as one of the host cities shows the programme’s commitment to decentralising art and encouraging encounters between diverse communities,” said Edgar Endress, Chilean artist and professor at George Mason University, who coordinated the collaboration between the teams from Qatar and UACH.

Throughout the week, public talks and visits to local heritage sites were also held, creating spaces for dialogue among artists, students, and academics about the role of public art as a tool for intercultural exchange.

The presence of Years of Culture in Valdivia left a mark not only on the walls of the Los Ríos region, but also on the university and local community, establishing southern Chile as a new point of connection on the global public art map.

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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.

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