

From Doha to Buenos Aires: Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra Bridges Continents Through Music

QPO to dazzle with a powerful cultural programme at Teatro Colón as part of the Qatar-Argentina 2025 Year of Culture

3 September 2025 – Doha, Qatar – In a landmark cultural encounter between the Gulf and South America, the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO) will make its debut at Buenos Aires' storied Teatro Colón on September 17, 2025. The performance is organised in partnership with the Ministry of Culture of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires as part of the Qatar-Argentina 2025 Year of Culture. As a prelude to the high-profile event at Teatro Colón, QPO will kick off the Qatar-Argentina tour at the Qatar National Convention Centre on September 14.

The Doha concert will preview QPO's first South American tour, underscoring its role as a cultural bridge. At Teatro Colón, renowned for its acoustics and architecture, the debut marks a milestone that celebrates music's universality and the venue's legacy as a stage for global exchange.

"We are honoured to welcome the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra to Buenos Aires, and especially to the historic stage of Teatro Colón," said Ms. Gabriela Ricardes, Minister of Culture of the Government of the City of Buenos Aires. "This collaboration embodies the power of cultural diplomacy to deepen mutual understanding and inspire artistic expressions across continents. Qatar has been a wonderful partner this year and we are excited for the busy fall season of concerts, exhibitions, expos and youth-focused exchanges."

The programme, a carefully curated tour de force, will feature Argentinian bandoneon virtuoso Víctor Hugo Villena alongside more than 70 QPO musicians under the baton of Grammy-nominated Maestro Enrique Arturo Diemecke, in his first return to Teatro Colón since serving as its Artistic General Director from 2017 to 2022. From the sweeping rhythms of Esteban Benzecry's *Obertura Tanguera* to the haunting beauty of Dana Al Fardan's *Polaris* and *Borealis*, the repertoire is designed as a cross-continental dialogue between tango, classical, and Arab musical traditions.

"The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra was founded to promote cultural exchange through music and this performance is a defining expression of that mission," said Kurt Meister, Executive Director of QPO. "To share a stage with Maestro Diemecke and Virtuoso Villena in a hall as iconic as Teatro Colón is a great honour and a powerful symbol of the universality of music."

Villena, a laureate of Argentina's National Bandoneon Competition and a celebrated ambassador of the instrument, will bring his trademark virtuosity and emotional depth to Astor Piazzolla's *Concerto for Bandoneón "Aconcagua,"* a modern tango masterpiece that fuses passion, complexity, and unmistakable Argentinian soul.

The programme will also include Alberto Ginastera's *Variaciones Concertantes* and Qatari composer Nasser Sahim's *Four Seasons & Spirit of Maqam*, striking compositions that interweave Gulf musical scales with classical orchestration. Dr. Nasser Sahim, also QPO's Deputy Executive Director, is a composer, vocalist, and musical researcher with over 25 years of experience.

Founded in 2007 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, QPO is a cultural beacon for the region. With members hailing from 28 countries and roots in some of the world's most esteemed ensembles, including the New York Philharmonic and BBC Symphony, the orchestra has performed at La Scala, Royal Albert Hall, and now, Teatro Colón. Its mission, to blend Western symphonic repertoire with Arab musical heritage, will be on full display in Buenos Aires.

Both concerts, offered free of charge, are a cultural gift from Qatar to local and international audiences, underscoring music's role as a bridge between people, languages, and histories.

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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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