

Teatro Colón Hosts Historic Qatar Argentina and Chile Year of Culture Concert

Buenos Aires, Argentina – September 17, 2025 — The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra (QPO) launched its first South American tour with an opening concert in Doha, attended by Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, followed by a historic debut at Buenos Aires' Teatro Colón on 17 September. The performance marked a high point in the Years of Culture initiative this year, a global effort that supports cultural curiosity and strengthens ties through international exchanges across social development, heritage, creative industries and innovation.

Conducted by maestro Enrique Arturo Diemecke, the programme combined the rhythmic passion of Latin America and the deep tonal heritage of the Arab world. At Teatro Colón, frequently rated among the world's top opera venues and celebrated for its acoustics, the QPO brought its unique fusion of Western symphonic traditions and the musical heritage of the Arab world to Argentina's passionate audience.

Maestro Diemecke led over 70 QPO musicians in a performance described as both "a defining expression" of the orchestra's cultural exchange mission and "a powerful symbol of the universality of music." It was especially poignant given Diemecke's prior tenure as Artistic General Director of Teatro Colón from 2017 to 2022, marking his first return to the venue.

Víctor Hugo Villena, Argentina's celebrated bandoneon virtuoso, delivered a stirring rendition of Piazzolla's *Aconcagua*, infusing the piece with emotive depth and a profound sense of national identity.

Showcasing Qatar's commitment to supporting local composers, works by Dana Al Fardan and Dr. Nasser Sahim, the latter of whom also serves as QPO's Deputy Executive Director, introduced orchestral textures imbued with cinematic grandeur and rooted in the traditional maqam scales of the Gulf.

Kurt Meister, the Executive Director of QPO, emphasised the significance of the performance: "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."

Gabriela Ricardes, Minister of Culture for the City of Buenos Aires, echoed these sentiments, lauding the collaboration as "a powerful expression of cultural diplomacy" and celebrating Qatar as a distinguished partner in this year's cultural season.

Founded in 2007 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bint Nasser, the QPO unites musicians from over 28 countries, many hailing from celebrated ensembles like the New York Philharmonic and BBC Symphony Orchestra.

-ENDS-

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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