

World Premiere of Malek Jandali's Syrian Symphony with Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra

American Syrian composer Malek Jandali's 2025-2026 season starts off with the world premiere of his Syrian Symphony with the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra in Doha

26 January 2025 — On January 25, 2025, the Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra presented the highly anticipated world premiere of Syrian Symphony by renowned composer Malek Jandali at the Qatar National Convention Centre in collaboration with Qatar Museums and Years of Culture, an initiative rooted in celebrating people and cultures around the world through long term exchanges, artistic expression and cultural cooperation. This groundbreaking symphonic work, conducted by Grammy-nominated maestro Alastair Willis, is a tribute to the Syrian people's enduring quest for freedom, dignity, and peace.

The Syrian Symphony is a profound artistic expression, weaving the rich tapestry of Syria's musical heritage into four evocative movements. Each movement is inspired by the chants and voices that emerged during Syria's historic revolution, reflecting the resilience, courage, and aspirations of its people. Through this symphony, Jandali continues his mission to preserve and celebrate Arabic culture while harnessing the universal language of music to inspire unity and peace.

Jandali, celebrated for his ability to blend ancient melodies with contemporary composition, describes the work as "a tribute to the timeless spirit of the Syrian people and their unwavering pursuit of human dignity." He adds, "The Syrian Symphony is not just a musical composition—it is a testament to the power of art as a beacon of hope and a bridge for humanity."

The world premiere marks a pivotal moment in the global music scene, bringing together audiences to experience a symphonic work that transcends borders and celebrates the shared values of freedom and cultural pride.

The event gathered distinguished guests, music enthusiasts, and cultural leaders from around the world. It served as a platform to spotlight the vital role of music in preserving heritage and supporting dialogue across nations. This concert was presented as a legacy project of the Qatar-MENASA 2022 Year of Culture.

About Malek Jandali:

Malek Jandali is an award-winning Syrian-American composer, pianist, and cultural ambassador known for his innovative fusion of ancient Middle Eastern musical traditions with Western classical techniques. He is the founder of Pianos for peace and the composer-in-residence at Qatar Museums and Queens University. His work is dedicated to the preservation of cultural heritage and advocating for peace and human rights through music.

About Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra:

The Qatar Philharmonic Orchestra, founded by Qatar Foundation, promotes music as a unifying language that bridges cultures. Committed to presenting a wide range of repertoire, the orchestra collaborates with world-class composers and artists to enrich the cultural landscape of the Middle East and beyond.

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 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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