



NATIONAL MUSEUM OF QATAR COMMISSIONED ARTWORKS

ALFA, 2019

Jean-Michel Othoniel (b. 1964, France)
Painted Stainless Steel

In dialogue with the architecture of the National Museum of Qatar, Jean-Michel Othoniel created a monumental installation of 114 fountain sculptures.

ALFA arises like majestic black reeds along the 900-meter-long shores of the lagoon. From various angles, silhouettes reflected on the water evoke the abstract beauty of Arabic calligraphy. During the day, every half hour the sculptures transform into fountains, launching arabesques of water towards the sky. At night, the water jets light up, highlighting the curves of the museum's architecture.

Othoniel's enchanting aesthetics revolve around the notion of emotional geometry. Using the repetition of modular elements such as bricks or his signature beads, which are a recurring motif, he creates sculptures whose relationship to human scale ranges from intimacy to monumentality.

Gates to the Sea, 2019

Simone Fattal (b. 1942, Syria)
Bronze

Gates to the Sea embodies both the history of the State of Qatar and its present. On this sculptural piece, the artist Simone Fattal has chosen to inscribe the petroglyphs found at various archeological sites across Qatar. The petroglyphs depict boats, fish, and scales, which tell us that the history of Qatar is inseparable from the sea that surrounds it.

Qatari captains and sailors were famous for pearl diving and the merchants for the international commerce that ensued. Still today, the land produces and exports by sea, gas and other essential products for the world market. By marking the entrance to the new National Museum of Qatar, the gate provides a link between the past and the present.

Fattal was born in Damascus, Syria, and raised in Lebanon. In 1988, she enrolled in a course at the Art Institute of San Francisco, which culminated with her newfound dedication to sculpture and ceramics.

Flag of Glory, 2019

Ahmed Al Bahrani (b. 1965, Qatar)
Bronze

Ahmed Al Bahrani's *Flag of Glory* is an iconic representation of a forceful nation. The artist's figurative and monumental skills capture the movement of the grasping hands. As one hand supports the other, they unitedly raise the flag with an unstoppable force.

This sculpture embodies the spirit of National Day for all citizens of Qatar, celebrating, honoring and commemorating the leadership of Qatar, and its people: *Dar Al'iz*, *Tamim Al Majd*, and *Hamad Al Khair*. It also glorifies the burgundy color not only seen in the flag, but also the burgundy that runs through all our veins.

Al Bahrani's sculpture is a declaration and a testimony to the way in which the country of Qatar embraces race, culture and gender in an impartial manner and honors its people, as Qataris and non-Qataris alike.

On their Way, 2013

Roch Vandromme (b. 1953, France)

Bronze

Camels are extraordinary animals, closely bound to the people of Qatar and life in *al barr* (desert). In early 2009, Roch Vandromme visited Qatar with the intention to witness, experience and study this close bond for himself. During his visit, Vandromme created sketches to capture these majestic animals' essence and character. His intention was to portray the close relationship between humans and camels. In this sculpture, the presence of the two calves at the front represents and celebrates the continuation of this dynamic relationship.

Vandromme studied architecture at the Beaux-Arts in Paris and then attended the Studio of Sculptor Charles Gadenne. He dedicates his career to capturing snapshots of animals at peace in their natural state and gives them life in bronze sculptures.

Motherland, 2018

Hassan bin Mohammed Al Thani (b.1962, France)

Polished Steel

Motherland expresses and represents the artist's connection and appreciation for the land, motherhood, and national identity. The large-scale sculpture references a traditional sailing *dhow* resting on the sands of the shore. The artwork also acts as a tribute to the region's last generation of women who wore the *battoula*.

The original work by Hassan bin Mohammed Al Thani dates back to 2002. This particular edition was commissioned by Qatar Museums to be part of its art collection.

Artist, scholar and collector, Al Thani has played a pioneering role since the 1980s in cultivating and preserving modern and contemporary art in the Middle East and North Africa. He has been at the forefront of art, cultural and educational institutions in Qatar and is responsible for the foundation of Mathaf. His artwork, which takes many forms, including painting, photography, sculpture and experimentation with fabric, is deeply rooted in Qatar's history and traditions and inspired by his friendships and exchanges with artists from across the Arab world.

Central Midkhan, 2019

Aisha Nasser Al Sowaidi (b. 1983, Qatar)

Copper

Adapting with the idea of home systems, *Central Midkhan* is designed to distribute scent into more than one direction and place. When not in use, this industrial-looking installation creates a strong aesthetic statement that celebrates design in various industries. This installation takes the idea of a traditional and local ritual and transforms it into a global concept of home systems.

Aisha Nasser Al Sowaidi is a multidisciplinary designer whose designs are an expression of a Qatari designer towards the fast developing country, globalisation, and traditions. Al Sowaidi rethinks the forms of the daily objects within a household, moving the traditional artefacts towards contemporary forms and functions.

Wisdom of a Nation, 2019

Ali Hassan Al Jaber (b. 1956, Qatar)

Aluminium

For over 25 years Ali Hassan Al Jaber, a pioneering Qatari artist, has used the 28 letters of the Arabic alphabet in his art, finding a worldly beauty in each letter. Inspired by the Qatari flag, Al Jaber references the eloquent nature of his mastered calligraphy style to form *Wisdom of a Nation*.

For centuries Arabic poetry in Arab culture was the main form of literary expression. Today, Al Jaber's work serves as a welcoming message to our visitors, with an extract from the poem of Sheikh Jassim bin Mohammed bin Thani, the founder of Qatar, and his decisive role in establishing an independent sheikhdom.

Trained as a calligrapher, Al Jaber is a self-taught artist who graduated with a degree in history from Qatar University in 1982. Hassan works in a range of styles and media to create semi-abstract compositions, characterised by the use of bright bold colours and a combination of calligraphic and figural forms.

Kan Ya Ma Kaan, 2019

Bouthayna Al Muftah (b. 1987, Qatar)

Ink on paper with Steel Mounting System

The theme around this piece centers on Qatari Women and their culturally rooted association with *thahab* (gold). The portraits of women explores the notion of a place and time - hence the title, *Kan Ya Ma Kaan*. It's a phrase that has the same connotations as 'Once Upon a Time' – any person, male, female or child has a deep-rooted relationship with this phrase coming from folkloric tales, cinema and satirical idioms.

Here, it references the idea of time vis-à-vis its audience today. When we think of the words *Kan Ya Ma Kaan*, we also think of the next few words following these words in any tale, '*Fe Khadeem al Zamaan*'. It is the visuals of the title that the artist presents to its viewers, and wills the instinctive continuation in their minds – '*Fe Khadeem al Zamaan*'. The artist questions embedded phrases, memories and stories of her culture. Provoking an automatic reaction that mirrors the said person's background and childhood recollections, the artist aims to reignite her audience's ingrained traditions and history.

Bouthayna Al Muftah is a Qatari visual artist, her conceptual work is documented through painting and mixed media installations to deconstruct and rediscover Qatari history in her signature abstract style.

Time Unearthed, 2018

Ogawa Machiko (b. 1946, Japan)

Porcelain, Stoneware, Coiled Glass and Glaze

This work comprises 30 unique elements constructed from porcelain, stoneware, glass and glaze, coiled and fused.

Ogawa Machiko studied ceramics at the National University of Fine Arts and Music, Tokyo, and the École des Métiers d'Art, Paris, then spent more than three years in West Africa, learning basic ceramic techniques.