

QERTAS



متاحف مشيرب
MSHIREB MUSEUMS

The Innovation Issue

Sara Al-Mannai

In this issue of Qertas we will explore one of the five Msheireb values and see the different ways Innovation is reflected in Msheireb Downtown, the Museums and other fields.

Interpreting innovation in how we work, we wanted to widen our network and how we reflect the museums in an innovative way through creating a new program directed towards schools and teachers. In this issue we will see more about Msheireb Museum Friends and the program, educators and participants also share their experience with being a MMF and the Museums.

Also, for the first time in Qertas we wanted to expand our readers' platform through including both Arabic and English versions of all the articles, we hope you enjoy the new issue and happy reading!

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More Than Just A Museum

Sara Al-Hajri & Sara Al-Mannai

Msheireb Museums hosted various events in 2018. Some were small and others were big events which made the footfall count rise giving meaning to the phrase "Msheireb heart of Doha".

The events ranged from professional corporate workshops to entertainment and music. During the month of March, the International Food Festival held part of their pre-festival campaign here in the museums. They created a series of cooking workshops and activities with the help of the museum education staff teaching students basic cooking skills and healthy recipes.



Qatar Music academy also hosted their Annual Arab Department concert In Mohammed Bin Jassim House in an evening filled with enchanting Maqam music.

Workshops by Qatar Development Bank also took place, and the US embassy contributed to the Msheireb Museums library by adding the Trafficking in Persons 2017 report, which is now available at the at Bin Jelmood House library.



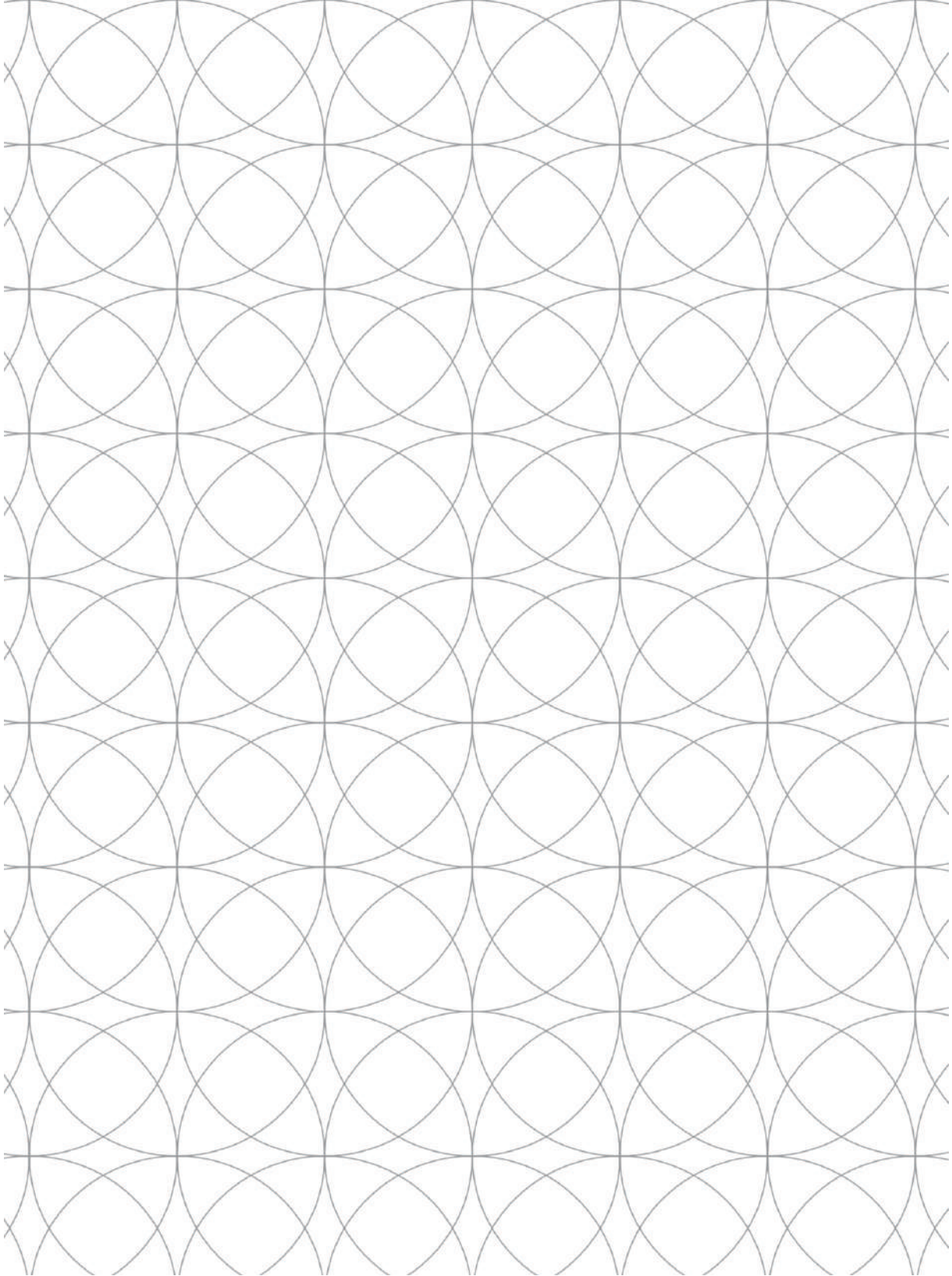
This year also the museums partnered with University College of London here in Qatar to host another successful exhibition under the name "We are the Daughters of Qatar" in Company House exhibition space.



Create Your Own

Moza Al-Thani

In line with this month's theme of innovation, this activity encourages you to create your own pattern or picture by filling in the shapes in the page below. Be creative, follow a guideline of an image or create your own by free styling!



Innovative Museums

Sara Al-Mannai

Museums have evolved considerably since being "Cabinets of curiosities" expanding and diversifying genres ranging from weird eclectic museums like spy museums, underwater museums to big traditional historic museums housing millions of objects and artifacts from thousands of years back.

Museums are branching out from the spoon-feeding traditional approach to creating a multi-sensory wholesome experience engaging the visitors' senses and opening their minds to interpret the content in different ways.

Studying birds

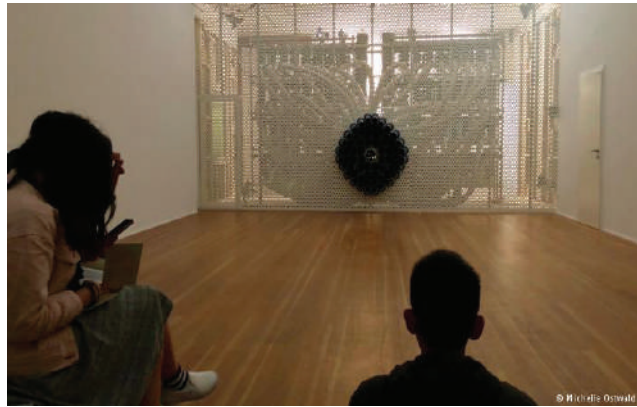
Swiss Ornithological Institute in Sempach, Switzerland visitors have the experience of viewing the world from a bird's perspective. "Throughout the visit, visitors must think like a bird, deciding what to eat or where to live. At the end of the tour, visitors learn what kind of bird they resemble most based on their decisions."

Vogelwarte.ch



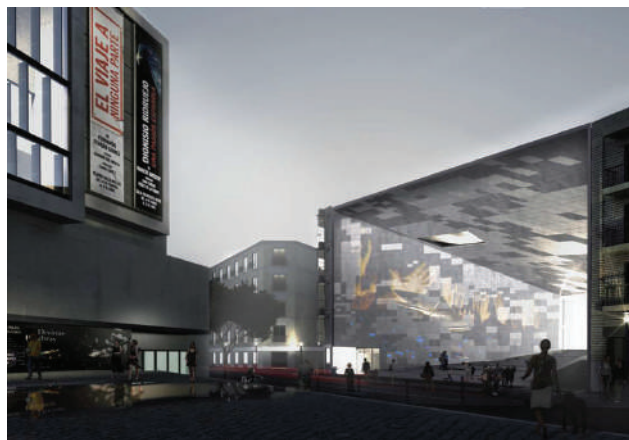
Smelling exhibition

At the Martin-Gropius museum in Berlin, visitors get to use their sense of smell in the exhibition under the name "World without outside". Visitors sit on a simple bench while smelling a 12 minutes composition called Osmodrama emitting from a machine called the Smeller. There are 64 different scents which are presented one after another and vanishing after a few seconds.



Madrid Digital Arts Museum

Still haven't been built yet, the newly designed museum focuses on creating a "Meta-Museum". Titled Urban Interface which is based around the idea of connectivity, allowing individuals anywhere in the world to participate and submit their own installation the exhibits can be viewed from anywhere in the world available on the web.

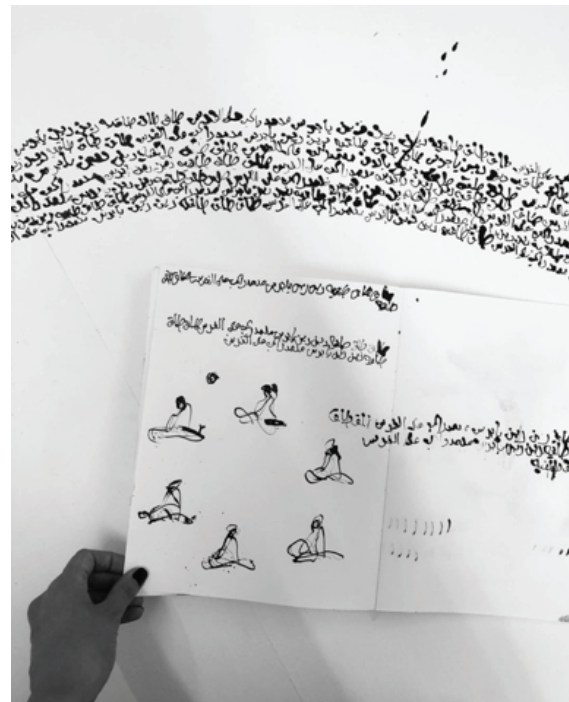


Exhibitions and Museums

Amna Al Fihani

Doha hosts a number of annual art exhibitions for some talented early career and professional artists, but what distinguishes the summer one which lasts from July to September are some beautiful and inspiring exhibitions, such as:

The Dual Inspirations Exhibition, which takes place in (Garage) Fire Station Art Gallery and brings together a wide variety of works by 18 artists-in-residence, will give these artists the opportunity to translate their works into valuable artistic works that reflect their aesthetic output and the development of their creative sense and techniques. This is also a good opportunity for young artists to collaborate with Mathaf (Arab Museum of Modern Art) in the translation and interpretation of some of the works of art produced in the 1920s into modern and contemporary artworks, which are innovative in thought and serve to recreate those artistic works from an invigorating modern perspective. It is worth mentioning that the Fire Station Art Gallery provides an opportunity for artists and researchers (artists-in-residence) through studios offering an ideal environment for creativity and interaction among different artists, through technical workshops, etc.



The Arab Museum of Modern Art is a leading museum in the State of Qatar. Hosting a number of modern and contemporary collections from the Arab World, the museum is a space for anyone to use and benefit from. It is also a forum for meetings and interactive discussions about art.



On the outskirts of Doha, precisely in the Arab Museum of Modern Art, the exhibition of the Qatari artist Bouthayna Al-Muftah (*Echoes*) unveils with first-rate innovative works of art in which she records her childhood memories, personal thoughts and human attitudes in the form of edifying works from the gamut of the artist's cultural and social repertoire. The distinctive work of the artist is also reflected in her use of various materials such as glass and cloth.

Msheireb Museums Friends: Becoming Expert Museum Educators

Sara Al-Mannai

In this issue we will shed a light on teachers' experiences in the museums who are part of the Msheireb Museums Friends program created by the education team. The program has been running for almost 2 years for teachers from different schools, different grades teaching different subjects from both local and International schools. The teachers learn the museums' content to eventually become expert tour guides for their students customizing their own tours to their curriculum.



The teachers join an extensive training program, which spans over several months in the year becoming familiar with the museums' content through tours by the education team supported by a detailed written guideline for each and every section in the museums.

The program concludes with an assessment to test their knowledge and ensure that all teachers are fully equipped to run their own tours and a yearly graduation ceremony held at the World Museums Day celebration.

In the past year, cultural and youth centers also joined the program learning how to lead their own tours for their students and center members. The program is constantly being developed and enhanced to encompass as many interested educators as possible with plans to diversify the MMF with new members from new schools, centers and hopefully university students.

In the next section we will share the MMF experiences with the program and get to know the activities they have created with their students supporting their curriculum.

The House is Still Alive

Shaikha bint Abdul Aziz Burshid - Bedaya center

Qatar in the past, present and future" These are some of the words of His Highness Sheikh Hamad Bin Khalifa Al Thani, the Father Emir, which convey many meanings which could be translated in all areas of life. The echoes of these words are undoubtedly reflected in Msheireb Downtown Doha in general and Msheireb Museums in particular, which embody the the past and its legacy. We experience there the taste of life in the imposing Radwani House and move progressively to embrace freedom in Bin Jelmood House, and then onto the prospects of the "black gold" (oil) in the Company's Head Office or also known as the Company House, which was a turning point in many aspects of Qatar's economic, social and political life. It opened up great horizons and drew the configurations of the future of the country, as can be witnessed in Sheikh Mohammed Bin Jassim's House that I invite you, dear reader, to discover "Msheireb in the Past, Present and Future."

When I first joined "Msheireb Museums Friends" program, I was profoundly convinced that its outcomes could only be clear and tangible because of my personal belief that the four Houses do not represent mere commodities and historical narratives. Rather, they provide free educational material that undoubtedly simulate life and interacts with history in a way that distinguishes these four Houses from the other museums in the State of Qatar students or tourists visit and which, in the main, consist of tours around displays of museum holdings and manuscripts. Msheireb Museums, in contrast, addresses the student's mind and fulfills several educational purposes that I will state below.

One of my dreams as a student of history at Qatar University was to visit the museums of Muhammad Ali Palace (Manial Palace) in Egypt and Hagia Sophia Mosque and Church in Turkey. This persistence, in fact, is not unique to me personally, but one of the strongest reasons that attract tourists, researchers and students to these museums is the principle of originality of everything: the original building itself, the artifacts and collections used in the building, social life and the fact that the kind of life experienced in the original place is relived in these buildings is what really keeps people coming to these museums. It is an edifying experience that helps consolidate knowledge and education which, as a matter of fact, do not merely consist of teaching and using old materials from displayed books and collectibles.

These unique qualities exist in the four Houses located in Msheireb Museums, thus making it the first destination for education, historically speaking, where the visitor does not only get exposed to objects and artifacts, but the original location which narrates and simulates the history of the same place. Radwani House, for instance, is a living example of Qatari social life, and is actually the original home of Radwani family, after which the Museum is named.

As you take a tour, you subconsciously relive and reconstruct the social life, and you feel the presence of the souls who once inhabited the building as though you were living with them in the past. This vivid image will be deeply engraved in the mind of the visitor/learner, in a precise, practical and emotional way. As for the rest of the Houses, each has its own unique educational style, through such outlets as smart TV screens and original interviews, using quality writing and media, as well as the relevance of the content and its dissemination among the public in an attractive and lucid style grasped by young and old alike.

Dear Reader,

In conclusion, I can only confirm, once again, that when you actually visit the four Houses, the idea that "the house is still teeming with life" will mesmerize you.

"An intriguing history that arouses feelings of longing for knowledge"

Amer Ali Al-Qudah - Hassan bin Thabit Secondary School for Boys

Ah! Msheireb! I don't know where to start From Bin Jelmood House, from Radwani House, or... Oh, such a glamorous history full with events, an intriguing history that arouses feelings of longing for knowledge.

My experience with Msheireb Museums started when I was chosen by my school administration to join Msheireb Museums Friends. I was hesitant at first, especially because of the pressure of work. I decided to go to the first meeting and thought I would give it a shot. But what wonderful surprises came my way! First of all, I was welcomed with open arms and earned the respect of the program managers. This exceptional treatment and mutual respect that developed between us as a team of Msheireb Museums Friends and the program managers made me stick to this program. The attractive history of Msheireb Museums aroused my strong desire to learn more about it.

There is the history of Qatar's struggle against slavery and its abolitionist endeavors.... The early history of the streets of Qatar... We started work that I hoped would never come to an end. We prepared a lot of programs aimed at educating students about the history and themes of Msheireb Museums. Visits were arranged for our students, and we also devoted part of the history curriculum to raise awareness among students of the history of Msheireb Museums. It's a pity, nonetheless, that the story of Msheireb Museums and its bright history are not effectively included in our school curricula. They are mostly mentioned in passing. I hope that more space will be given to this great history in our curricula so that our students know the history of our beloved country Qatar. I also hope that the Msheireb Museums management will enterprisingly market the concept of the museum and familiarize people with its history. In reality, many people know very little about Msheireb Museums.

I hope as well that Msheireb Museums expand their wonderful program so that all people can learn about the ancient history of our beloved country, a history which we indeed have but which many countries in the world don't. In addition, the history of Msheireb is, but the real translation of the statement of His Highness Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad, may God protect him, (Qatar the Ka'bat al Mathioum). In fact, the history of Msheireb translates this saying with Qatar coming to the rescue of the oppressed ever since that glorious time in history.

"Captivated by the spirit of patriotism and the quest for authentic history"

Ali Yousef Al-Majid - Musaab bin Omair Secondary School

My experience as a member of Msheireb Museums Friends was exciting and productive. I was truly captivated by the spirit of patriotism and the quest for authentic history, witnessing how ancient Qatari historical and archeological heritage blends with the sophistication of modern-day technology.

It was an opportunity for me to have a first-hand experience about the importance of having and showing interest in museums in the State of Qatar, to know the purpose of creating such a group (Msheireb Museums Friends), which serves to preserve cultural and historical heritage, and to explore the artistic legacy of our ancestors. The program of the visit to Msheireb Museums consisted of tours organized for secondary school students in the Company House and Radwani House. The visit allowed them to learn several things including:

- Qatari family life at a given point in history, i.e. before and after the oil boom, through the artifacts of the Qatari house and the development of family life following the discovery of oil.
- Works of the Qatari man, before and after the oil boom, and the Company House's holdings. They also had initiation into interactive media, films and photos.

I would like to propose:

- The addition of new small-scale events about Qatari heritage in Msheireb in order to reinforce the sense of Qatari identity in the place.
- The organization of miniature exhibitions about the important house-holdings of Qataris in the past.
- The advertisement and marketing, in an intensive manner, of Msheireb Museums in various media, the creation of diversity in the field of museums.

I would like to advise those who are interested in joining Msheireb Museums Friends program in the future to demonstrate seriousness and commitment through participation and cooperation with the program members, to respond positively to workshop invitation or requests for proposals that benefit their programs and, above all, to preserve the cleanliness of the place and its artistic holdings.

In conclusion, I would like to thank all the members of the Msheireb Museums Friends.

"Msheireb Museums offer a rich environment for applied learning outside school walls"

Hissah Hassan Al-Sulaiti - Al-Qadisiyah Model School – Kindergarten Division

When it was launched, the Msheireb Museums Friends program drew my curiosity, and I was very pleased to be chosen to represent my kindergarten school (Al-Qadisiyah Model School) in the program. When we visited the museums, a feeling of nostalgia for the times of our ancestors who lived on this blessed land captivated me. The museum represents various economic, social and political aspects of our life in our beloved country from the pre-oil era to the present one.



Msheireb Museums offer a rich environment for applied learning outside school walls, especially for the kindergarten stage, as I intend to use Radwani House as a model in the introduction of ancient and modern Qatar. Their rich holdings and varied materials, which represent the country's old life pattern, helped us discover the materials used in the old construction style and household tools, all located in an inspiring house that exhibits the warmth of the family as a characteristic of the Qatari society in modern and ancient times. This first experience of the place will help us connect the child to the homeland and strengthen his sense of belonging.



Children at the kindergarten level are also able to learn about the different trades associated with the discovery of oil and the means of transportation used at that time, especially 'Antarnash (pidginized form of the word "International" in reference to the then popular US trucks manufacturer), and this exposure enables the child to compare between these trades and those practiced nowadays under our wise leadership, which have made of Qatar one of the most developed countries in the world.

I hope that the implementation of this program will help raise our children's awareness of the efforts of their parents and grandparents, and how these contributed to the fame and reputation of our beloved country among the nations of the world. The modest experiment we have undertaken will pave the way for further pedagogical experiments that could be undertaken at Msheireb Museums.

Glory and Glamor: The Story of Qatar

Hayat Adil Al-Hudaidi - Zainab Bint Jahsh Primary School

It was like a beautiful and quiet dream, which started like a musical piece played between the rooms and walls of Msheireb Museums. Its melodies told stories of our ancestors. Starting from the moment I was chosen as a member of the Msheireb Museums Friends, I felt delighted and honored to have a role to play among the ancestors and through their glorious history. The fabric of my journey was woven as in an epic poem, starting from Radwani House and the "scent" of traditional Qatari folklore with a burning desire to reach the Company House, where will, patience, determination and echoes of ancestors' voices greeted us. The echoes were imbued with the message of Sheikh Hamad and Sheikha Moza's message that could be felt around us.

I completed my journey in the presence of an excellent team. We were first told the story of Bin Jelmood House with its shading planks, and as we reached the Quranic verses that confirm the Islamic identity of the place and then the message of Sheikha Moza, which told me, as I strolled between the rooms, about the history of slavery and the abolitionist endeavor and determination until the process came to fruition. The last wall stands as a witness to the contributions of the Emir of the State of Qatar. As my journey came full circle, I gave a commitment to myself to relay everything I learned here to others by making a positive contribution, raising awareness and igniting the patriotic spirit. As the journey ended in Sheikh Jassim's House, where the past, present and future converge, all the way from the streets of ancient Qatar until the industrial area.

I felt the obligation to join the wonderful team by developing ideas and programs to incorporate the Qatari heritage in the educational curricula and by designing effective programs that would benefit everyone. Now, I use "Qertas Magazine" as a platform to share some thoughts that, despite my endeavors, will never be adequate to portray reality. I invite expatriates and youth to have a tour around the walls of the rooms so as to experience the feel of civilization. I am, indeed, proud of being a member of Msheireb Museums Friends. Thank you all.

I promise to convey to all my students what I have personally learned from you and to put into practice the message of the Emir of the country, Sheikh Tamim may God protect him. Long live Qatar, a country whose love unifies residents and expatriates.

Community: Services, Past-Present-Future

Kelli Kodi - ACS International school

All Grade 2 students were able to attend a field trip to the Msheireb Museum to explore How We Organise Ourselves: Communities provide services to meet the needs of their members. During our visit we focused on the Radwani House and the Mohammed bin Jassim house to focus on the ways the Msheireb neighborhood has changed over time and how it meets the needs of the community members.

During the day we used the museum spaces to formulate questions about the past, present and future. Students also were able to use and analyse evidence from a variety of historical, geographical and societal sources.

Humanities, Maths, PE and Arts Connections

Humanities

While in the Radwani House students were able to better understand how life changed for Qatar's residents, using real objects as the peacock mirror, clothing items and luxury items to see how rooms were simple and developed over time. In the Mohammed bin Jassim House, students were able to look at artefacts from the past, consider designs of the new buildings in the area and the ways the neighborhood will grow to be sustainable.

Maths and Arts

While visiting Souq Waqif students kept records of the services found in the souq to be used to develop bar graphs and charts. Looking at the way buildings are designed using shapes and forms, as well as, the patterns in the buildings; students then created their own pattern tile using recycled materials to make impressions and shapes in their clay.

PE

Museum staff taught the students traditional Qatari games such as: taq taq taiya, khishaisha, and har barid in the courtyard to get the students moving around. Overall students, teachers and parent were amazed at the wonderful museum which is tucked away in the Msheireb neighborhood that highlights and shares our Qatari culture and traditions.

Msheireb Museums, Offering Windows To The Past For Our Students

Karoliina Mutanen - Qatar Finland International School

I fell in love with the atmosphere and tranquility of the Msheireb Museums the first time I entered the premises. Among hustle and bustle of the Doha city, it felt like a haven of peace and as much a journey to the past as to my inner self.

Naturally, I wanted to share this experience with my students the first possible moment. In the end of the first term last year, we packed two buses full of 3rd-graders and started our excursion to the history of Msheireb area and Qatar in general. The goal was to raise children's appreciation and awareness of the history their home city, learn about history as a subject and have a concrete experience related to Qatar History. Methods needed to be active and hands on, in order to awake their interest and keep it up. Curriculum references included Qatar History, Social studies, English and World History.



We entered the time machine in the form of SEPPPO game (available in seppo.io), an interactive mobile game platform where learning contents can totally be produced by teachers themselves. Students join a game, answer questions online and get immediate feedback from teachers. All you need is an Internet connection and some mobile devices. For our young target group, we chose the Radwani house and the Company house as our visiting program.

We started the day in the learning center where we could get all students online with their iPads. After a short introduction to the task their objective was to visit all Radwani house rooms with special task in the SEPPPO game.



I had downloaded the map of the house with specific interactive stations where they needed to answer questions related to each room in the house. As the target group was students aged 7-9, we could not let them run free in the museum but all rooms were introduced by a teacher and after a short discussion they could complete the task by themselves.

I was positively surprised by the results we got from the visit. Students were highly engaged to the program and the whole activity. They understood the task from the beginning even though we had not tried the same activity before. The beauty of a SEPPPO game is that there are several possibilities to complete the given task in forms of written answers, audio recording, video or photo. This opportunity created a safe learning atmosphere to all students to participate the activity. No matter in which level they were in their language or content skills, the results could be delivered and reviewed and learning happened in all possible levels.

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We walked through the Radwani house and the Company house with semi- structured introductions and self- guided activity phases. Teachers were giving instant feedback by points and comments to the students' answers. Students learned (by answering questions and getting feedback) about the history in Doha and the Msheireb area, core issues in Qatar history and foundation of the society from past times to the present. They were actively involved to their learning process by asking and responding to the questions teachers had set to them and they got instant feedback in a form of an online game that seemed to be very attractive to them.

Also, one of the SEPPPO's feature is that you have a wonderful set of material you can use for learning also in future, back in the classroom.

Back at school, we made a gallery walk including the photos and videos students had created in the museum and we deepened the information with writing and exercises. Students found this way of working very rewarding since they had been in an active role of collecting and classifying the materials we used for further studies. I sincerely believe, this is the way for deeper learning in any give subject, and in this case, both our method and the amazing learning setting that the Msheireb Museums have to offer, were leading this activity to its success

This way a museum visit is not just another irrelevant field trip in the course of a school year, but an integrated part of the curriculum and learning targets of a specific content you want your students to learn.

Back to Msheireb: A Positive Example of Innovation in Museum Practices

Elena Terranova- University College of London

The cultural sector is now facing a challenging period that has led museums to dedicate more efforts to accomplish their social function. To further engage with the audiences, museums are experimenting with innovative programmes and approaches that are sometimes the results of collaborative projects with communities and other cultural or arts organisations. In Qatar's context, Msheireb Museums are pioneers of this new trend in museum practices.

The Museums and their staff are actively trying to adapt to the constantly changing world, and especially the background of Doha, and to play a more active role in society. To do so, they recently initiated fruitful collaborations with local academic partners that allowed students to refine the institutions' curatorial and interpretative processes, whilst offering something new to the visitors. The exhibition *Back to Msheireb: Shared Streets - Shared Stories*, hosted at Mohammed Bin Jassim House from the 4th of April to the 5th of October 2017, is a valid example of that.

It was organised by students of UCL Qatar, as part of their yearly UCLQurates initiative of the MA in Museum and Gallery Practice and told the story of how old Msheireb was transformed from a residential Qatari neighbourhood to a vibrant marketplace. Through this project, a diverse class of 20 MA students had the chance to create a real temporary exhibition from scratch, collaborating closely with the museums' staff in a professional environment.

The students worked on all steps necessary for an exhibition development process, including content's curation and interpretation, the design of the space, promotion and evaluation, and also the planning of related educational activities for schools and families; and this was a long and difficult journey. The project was indeed full of challenges to face, such as the short time to deliver the exhibition, the heterogeneity of the class, and the use of two languages (Arabic and English), and many last-minute problems to solve. However, it represented an incomparable opportunity to gain concrete work experience, to acquire new skills and to become familiar with professional museum standards.

Back to Msheireb and every other collaborative project undertaken by the Museums, can be considered catalysts for new museum practices, not only in the region, but also globally. These ground-breaking experiments facilitate a knowledge exchange that helps the Museums to rethink their strategies in a fresh way, the students to improve their learning through a concrete experience, and the voice of the local community to be considered and integrated in the museums' point of view.

Indeed, for example in *Back to Msheireb*, oral histories were collected from the community and presented in the exhibition, where visitors could listen to these voices from the past, experiencing a sense of nostalgia throughout a pop-up stores' installation. A thorough transformation is necessary in the museum sector and Msheireb Museums are striving to be at the forefront of innovation affirming their social role and promoting their relevance in the community.