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**GULF TIMES**  **COMMUNITY**

Monday, December 9, 2019  
Rabia II 12, 1441 AH

Doha today: 20° - 27°




# High Hopes

Alena Pyne, founder and choir conductor of Qatar Youth Choir and Qatar Junior Choir, on the genesis and future of the entities. **P4-5**

**BOLLYWOOD**

Dabangg 3 is exactly how we want to see Salman Khan: Prabhudheva.

Page 14



**HOLLYWOOD**

Impeachment isn't *Law & Order*. It's time to stop viewing it that way.

Page 15





**PRAYER TIME**

Fajr	4.45am
Shorooq (sunrise)	6.09am
Zuhr (noon)	11.27am
Asr (afternoon)	2.26pm
Maghreb (sunset)	4.46pm
Isha (night)	6.16pm

**USEFUL NUMBERS**

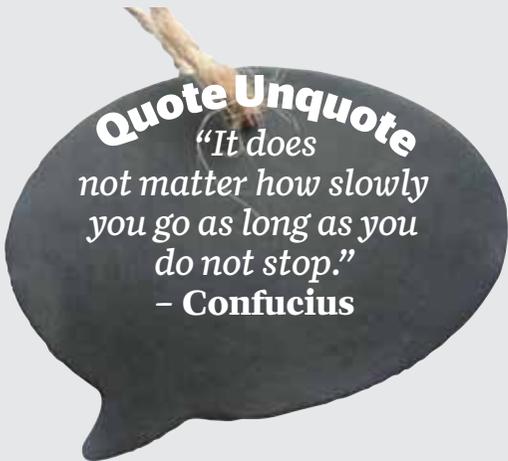


Emergency	999
Worldwide Emergency Number	112
Kahramaa - Electricity and Water	991
Local Directory	180
International Calls Enquires	150
Hamad International Airport	40106666
Labor Department	44508111, 44406537
Mowasalat Taxi	44588888
Qatar Airways	44496000
Hamad Medical Corporation	44392222, 44393333
Qatar General Electricity and Water Corporation	44845555, 44845464
Primary Health Care Corporation	44593333
Qatar Assistive Technology Centre	44594050
Qatar News Agency	44450205
	44450333
Q-Post - General Postal Corporation	44464444

**Humanitarian Services Office**

(Single window facility for the repatriation of bodies)

Ministry of Interior	40253371, 40253372, 40253369
Ministry of Health	40253370, 40253364
Hamad Medical Corporation	40253368, 40253365
Qatar Airways	40253374



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*Panipat*

**DIRECTION:** Ashutosh Gowariker  
**CAST:** Arjun Kapoor, Sanjay Dutt, Kriti Sanon  
**SYNOPSIS:** The film is based on the third battle of

Panipat which took place on the 14 of January in 1761 between the Marathas and the King of Afghanistan, Ahmad Shah Abdali.

**THEATRES:** The Mall, Landmark, Royal Plaza



*Unbreakable*

**DIRECTION:** Mae Czarina Cruz  
**CAST:** Angelica Panganiban, Richard Gutierrez, Bea Alonzo  
**SYNOPSIS:** What are the limits of friendship? A story

of an unconditional bond tested by time. Pain brought two friends together, but what will tear them apart?

**THEATRES:** The Mall, Royal Plaza



For movie timings and further details please scan the QR code above with your mobile phone camera or visit [qatarcinemas.com](http://qatarcinemas.com)



# ROUND & ABOUT

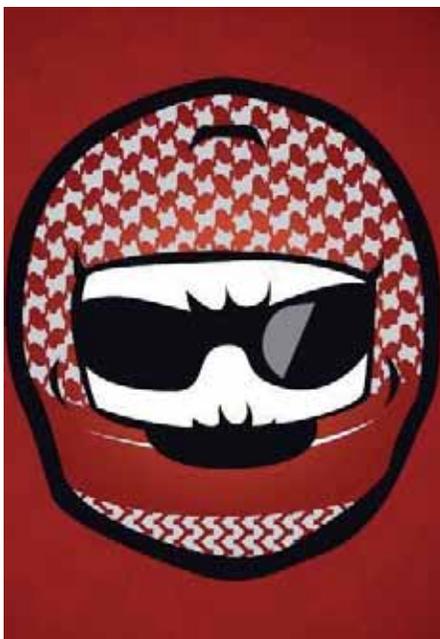
# COMMUNITY |



### Gems and Jewels Exhibition

**WHERE:** Museum of Islamic Art  
**WHEN:** Ongoing till January 18  
**TIME:** 9am onwards

The exhibition comes in celebration of the Qatar-India 2019 Year of Culture and presents a look at magnificent gems and jewellery from India. Set in Stone: Gems and Jewels from Royal Indian Courts showcases more than 100 pieces from across Qatar Museums' (QM) collections, including many masterpieces that have never been displayed before.

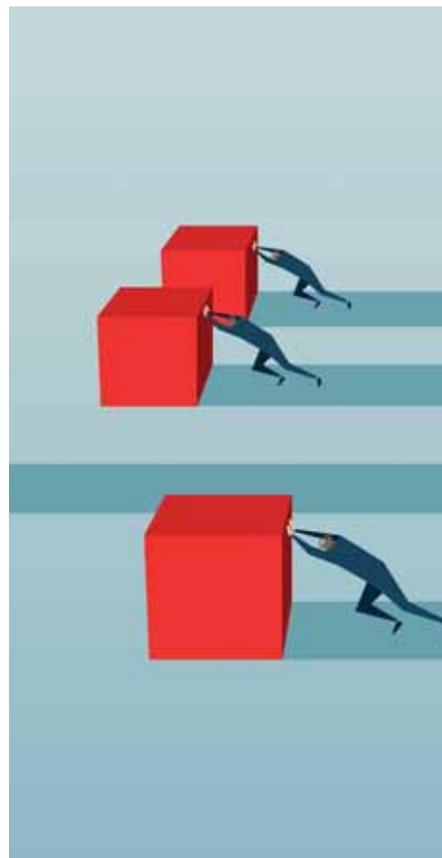


### Al Wakalat Car Market 2019

**WHERE:** Parking opposite to Khalifa International Stadium  
**WHEN:** December 19 - 28  
**TIME:** 4pm - 11:59pm

Al Wakalat Car Market aims to congregate car enthusiasts, prospective buyers, and automotive retailers with the best deals of the year in a single location. Al Wakalat Car Market will enable visitors to have access to cars at their best offers of the year, which

ensure to clear out stocks of approved cars.



### Career Guidance

**WHERE:** Right Track Consultants, Al Sadd  
**WHEN:** Sunday - Thursday  
**TIME:** 6pm - 8pm

Career guidance for course, country, college and entrance for students of Grade IX-XII, of all curriculum. Career assessments administered for stream preference, career test, branch preference, personality, multiple intelligence and learning styles and productivity. For more information, 55448835.

### After School Activities

**WHERE:** Atelier  
**WHEN:** Ongoing

Music and arts activities for students taking place after they finish their day in school includes Group Music lessons, Hip-hop, Ballet, Drawing and Painting, Drama Theatre & Taekwondo. Ages between 5 and 10 years old after school hours.



### Winter School for Grade IX-XII Students

**WHERE:** Inspire Training Academy, Najma St.

**WHEN:** December 25 - 29  
**TIME:** 8:30am - 1:30pm

Developing the leader within every teen today - for a better world tomorrow.

Each student deserves to discover their potential and acquire the skills, confidence and motivation to make things happen and bring about change. The five-day leadership and innovation programme is an exciting series of interactive workshops, energetic activities and fun-filled challenges specifically designed to inspire and enable each and every student to uncover their unique abilities, develop greater confidence and master strategies for success in the classroom and beyond. Programme leader, Dr Ram B. Ramchandran is Vice Dean and Professor of Strategy and Planning at the O.P. Jindal Global School, India. The event is organised by Right Track Consultants.

For registration details, contact 55448835.

### Ballet Lessons

**WHERE:** Music and Arts Atelier  
**WHEN:** Ongoing  
**TIME:** 4pm - 8pm

For more info e-mail at [registration@atelierqatar.com](mailto:registration@atelierqatar.com) or call on 33003839.



### Hobby Classes

**WHERE:** Mamangam Performing Art Centre

**WHEN:** Saturday - Friday

Mamangam is an art and performance centre started with a vision of spreading our knowledge, interests and experience in various disciplines in arts across different countries for children and adults.

Mamangam has become the favourite centre for learning. We offer regular classes in the following disciplines like traditional classical and folk dance forms, art and craft, drawing and painting, personality development and public speaking, Bollywood dance, contemporary, hip hop styles, music both vocals and instrumentals. To develop health consciousness, we train them karate, yoga with special sessions for kids and adults. Mamangam has also come up with chess and robotics in regular batches in an attempt to give a better learning experience, as they sharpen their minds and brains too.

For those who wish to register for more details, visit [www.mamangamqatar.in](http://www.mamangamqatar.in)



### Short Executive Programme

**WHERE:** HEC Paris in Qatar  
**WHEN:** Tomorrow - December 11

HEC Paris in Qatar offers 'General Management - The Navigator Programme' Executive Short Programme with HEC Paris Affiliate Professor Wolfgang Amann. This two-day programme will give aspiring and current and future managers a solid, hands-on introduction to the challenges and key tasks of general management. By the end of this session, participants will have gained a profound understanding of the roles and tasks, the opportunities and challenges, and the necessity to bridge as well as combine insights from leadership, governance, and strategy.



# “Choral world here getting bigger and maturing”

— Alena Pyne, renowned choir conductor

## Community Report

**Q**atar Youth Choir and Qatar Junior Choir have been making waves with their prowess wherever they have been able to execute their skills. Behind all these budding artistes lies a great teacher, who spares no stone unturned to hone their skills.

Alena Pyne is that formidable force. In this exclusive interview with *Community*, she dilates on her passion, how she set up the platforms, the challenges to keep it going, and future prospects of the young ones under tutelage.

**Alena, tell us about yourself, the passion for choral music and the rites of passage for Qatar Youth Choir and Qatar Junior Choir?**

I'm from Ireland. In 2011, my husband and I moved to Qatar with our three children aged 11, 9 and 7. I currently work as a music teacher in Kings College Doha. I have sung in choirs for as long as I can remember and have studied music all my life.

My passion is for all music genres, but I always had a strong desire to lead my own choir and Qatar presented me with the opportunity to do so. The voice is an amazing instrument which can really touch or speak to a person, draw from a listener hitherto hidden feelings and help people to heal. Singers sing texts, which is unique among all the instruments that exist.

The main difference between a winning performance and what can appear to be an identical performance by a runner-up performance is the emotion, the intention of the words, the feeling and interpretation of the song by the performer.

When we arrived in Doha, we quickly discovered there was no comparable choir available. I had a strong desire to fill that gap and started to explore choral directing in 2013, and founded Doha Children's Choir.

By the end of our first year, we had 43 singers, all from families who, like ourselves, had migrated here on work contracts. We started the 2nd year as Doha Youth Choir, a name much preferred by the singers. By the end of our 4th season in 2017-18, Doha Youth



**MAKING A STATEMENT:** Qatar Youth Choir during a performance in Lisbon.

Photos supplied

**Culturally, there are, of course differences over a wide geographic span of nationalities, but this is precisely what is wonderful to experience**

— Alena Pyne

Choir was operating in the space of a national youth choir and I made the decision to rename ourselves Qatar Youth Choir.

**What challenges have you faced building up your choirs in Doha?**

The first challenge is exposure to market factors and losing singers because contracts end and families move away. Fewer children are studying or participating in formal music education; therefore, the majority of singers coming to both choirs have no experience. But as referenced by the song High Hopes, we are like the ant who manages to shift the rubber tree plant! Out of necessity, our 'choir offering' has evolved to include specialist music theory classes and we have

also expanded the team to include a vocal coach. In 2015, I founded Qatar Junior Choir as a feeder choir that will eventually enable singers with some experience advancing to Qatar Youth Choir.

The final challenge has been attracting Arabic singers to the choir. As the level of interest in choir rises and we perform Arabic music more widely, I hope this will soon change.

**How many nationalities figure in your choirs and does the cultural mix hinder progress?**

Between both choirs our current members hold passports from India, Sri Lanka, Ireland, England, France, Canada, South Africa, Spain, USA, Egypt,

China, Poland, South Africa, Indonesia, Lebanon, South Korea and Belgium. Culturally, there are, of course differences over such a wide geographic span of nationalities, but this is precisely what is wonderful to experience. Through our, all such differences melt into one lovely family of like-minded people, who love music and who are ready to help me or help another singer or to do something additional so as to keep our choirs moving forward. We have the most supportive families which is truly our greatest strength.

**How has the choral landscape evolved since you started your choirs?**

Founding Qatar Youth Choir in 2013 definitely captured the

attention and interest of many, especially when I first started to take them to meet with other choirs in the world. Since then we have hosted many choirs and always offer workshops for the other choirs in Qatar with those visiting conductors. It is through this sort of experience that the wider choral effort in our schools, churches and community will become stronger and more successful.

While interest in choir is growing among the independent national schools, it has been slower to evolve than the explosion of interest that has occurred at private international schools where participation in choir has dramatically increased. Three years ago Head of Music Stephanie Gomaa launched Doha College's Qatar Primary School Choir of the Year Competition, and Sonja Park and Joris Laenen staged Qatar's first National Music Competition. This summer, Qatar was awarded the bid to host the World Symposium of Choral Music in 2023. The choral world here is getting bigger and maturing.

**What type of music do you perform?**

As well as world music, we sing a lot of Arabic repertoire. It was proving difficult to find good arrangements of Arabic songs but during last summer we were fortunate to connect with Maestro Barkev Taslakian from the renowned Fahya Choir in Lebanon. Maestro Barkev's mission is to share Arabic songs with the world and spread the opportunities for Arabic songs to be performed.

We now have access to fresh and improved Arabic song arrangements thanks to the generosity and vision of this great man and his organisation.

Together with our Patron international soprano Felicitas Fuchs Wittenkind, Maestro Barkev has agreed to be our Patron for Arabic Song. This means that he will always try to guide us to deliver the best performances of this exciting repertoire.

**How do platforms such as the Qatar Youth Choir and Qatar Junior Choir support young children who have a talent for music and singing?**

I believe there is talent to be found everywhere. It just needs to be awakened in the hands of passion for that talent. When I think back to my favourite subjects



at school, they were without exception, all led by passionate teachers.

#### Does choir support the overall personality of a child?

There is a place for every type of personality in choir. In fact, it's a great place for timid children to gradually grow their confidence levels as choir is a very safe environment to spend time in. There will be stronger and weaker singers in every choir group. In this way, those who are more timid by nature have time to find their way, and gradually their confidence grows so they can sing out more. There are many roles in choir that singers can aspire to and more recent recruits learn much from watching and hearing the more experienced ones.

Choir teaches discipline, method, patience, how to plan music study around academic studies. Choir helps children to improve their listening skills so as to hear each other. Singing in harmony together for long periods can create an environment where singers are likely to be more measured in their language with each other in their approach to issues that arise between them. Over time, choir can help shape a student into a more rounded, confident and studious person. Those that want to remain in choir will always make sure that their school grades don't slip! When everyone settles in, there exists a wonderful spirit, where life-long friendships can develop.

#### Tell us more about the work that the Qatar Youth Choir and Qatar Junior Choir do here in Qatar and overseas?

All students have choir training twice weekly with vocal coaching, separate sight-reading sessions and every student attends weekly music theory classes. Our students write annual Board theory exams and we also take Board choral exams. These exam awards contribute additional UCAS points to our singers applying to UK-based universities. We operate on a shoe-string, and to raise funds towards our trips we perform locally as much as possible.

We have performed all over Doha for National Day events, for special embassy functions and for private events. As both choirs work extremely hard to give off their very best, their reward is the opportunity to travel abroad and meet other choirs.

In our six short years, we have undertaken trips to Berlin, Hamburg and Wolfenbüttel in Germany, and Latvia, Croatia, Poland, Austria and Portugal. The choirs have had the opportunity to work with really great conductors and give concerts with other choirs.

The singers have such great memories from their experiences and many are still in touch with these other singer families. Travelling most certainly has broadened our singers' minds and opened them up to so many more aspects of this choral craft that I can predict with full certainty that our best is yet to come. I just



**PROWESS:** Students of the Qatar Junior Choir in the act.



**“Over time, choir can help shape a student into a more rounded, confident and studious person. Those that want to remain in choir will always make sure that their school grades don't slip!”**

hope it will be a very long time - a coming!

#### What are the performances that stand out in your memory?

Oooh... having the immense honour of performing our National Anthem for His Highness the Amir Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad al-Thani and his distinguished guests at the opening of our stunning Qatar National Library is top of the list. Next, was representing Qatar for the first time, in Lisbon at the World Choral Expo last July. Qatar Youth Choir also had the honour to sing the first song ever sung inside the Museum of Islamic

Art last April. Performing in a war tunnel under Zagreb city, the acoustic in this special space made us sound truly amazing!

There was great excitement when we were invited to perform for Qatar's Ambassador to Croatia, too, at the embassy. In Vienna last April, performing together with the Vienna Boys Choir was also a very special moment for us, especially given that four of our boy choristers have been awarded scholarships to join this incredible choir.

One more recent memory stands out for me – last September, when Qatar Junior Choir gave a very touching performance to

residents of a home for the elderly in Germany. I felt so proud of these singers aged between 10 and 13 and how they interacted so kindly with these very elderly people of varying mobilities and handicaps, language appeared not to matter. It was quite poignant to observe our young ambassadors being so very caring of others.

**Can you comment on the evaluation that was done by the International Federation for Choral Music (IFCM) in Qatar prior to Qatar being selected as the host nation for the 2023 World Choral Symposium?**

Clearly, the International

Federation for Choral Music sees great potential for growth in choral interest in both Qatar and the Arab regions. As Qatar prepares for the FIFA World Cup in 2022, they will be taking into account Qatar's ability to accommodate thousands of visiting choral singers and stage wonderful events at our wonderful and varied venues across the peninsula. Of course to organise such an event will take an enormous amount of planning and manpower but when Qatar and it's incredibly resourceful and forward-thinking business leaders put their minds to it, led by my colleagues Giovanni Pasini, Jennifer Taynen and myself, I am confident Qatar will stage the best World Choral Symposium yet.

#### From your perspective, where do you see the future of the choral scene in Qatar and the region?

The timing of the bid was excellent as over these past years, interest in choral singing is growing and our audiences are also growing. This is not just because of Qatar Youth and Junior Choirs activities, but over time all involved in choir-life have become more active. Due to the awarding of the World Choral Symposium, more people in Qatar are becoming aware of the burgeoning choral scene here. Exactly because of this winning bid, there are other major initiatives happening that will be announced soon, and which, we are confident will provide greater stability for this art form from which further growth and development will follow.

However, we really need the financial support of the State of Qatar and the commercial world so we can enhance and build upon what we are doing, attract the best workshop leaders from abroad and start to compete on the world stage.

At the same time, one must recognise and thank the Music Square/FNAC through Yamaha Fifty One East who have supported us from the very beginning, the Swiss International School Qatar who take care of us in so many special ways, the Millennium Hotel Doha that has been so generous in taking care of our visiting choir accommodation needs and who always step in to help us where they can.

I should mention the Saracen Group for their encouragement and support these past years and last but not least, I must express my gratitude to Ms Sonja Park for her belief in me and encouragement and her most generous support of us whenever possible. I wish to also thank Qatar Airways and Qatar National Tourist Council for enabling us to travel to Lisbon last summer to perform for the IFCM on a world stage with other fantastic choirs. We simply could not have attended without their immense financial support.

I cannot wait to discover what's next!

■ *Qatar Youth and Junior Choirs perform Winter Nights 3 today together with Marhalikans Vocal Ensemble. For tickets, please contact the choirs.*