**MIA Achieves Guinness World Record for Most Languages Used in Reading Relay**

*Little Prince by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry read in 55 languages*

**Doha, Qatar, 16 October:** The Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) on 12 October set the Guinness World Record for Most Languages Used in a Reading Relay with more than 150 participants, including both judges and readers. Participants read the much-loved title *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry in 55 languages in a record time of one hour and 19 minutes.

Languages read in the record breaking reading project were Arabic, French, Spanish, Irish, English, Dutch, Romanian, Portuguese, German, Tamil, Japanese, Korean, Persian, Polish, Serbian, Kannada, Croatian, Afrikaans, Armenian, Azerbaijani, Kyrgyz, Marathi, Amharic, Bengali, Kinyarwanda, Malay, Bosnian, Bulgarian, Chinese (Mandarin), Czech, Tagalog, Greek, Hindi, Georgian, Hungarian, Indonesian, Italian, Ukrainian, Kurdish, Malayalam, Montenegrin, Russian, Swahili, Thai, Turkish, Uzbek, Vietnamese, Urdu, Slovak, Gujarati, Lithuanian, Macedonian, Sanskrit, Kazakh, Yoruba and Arabic Sign Language.

Notable diginitaries in attendance during the reading relay were French Ambassador to Qatar HE Jean-Baptiste Faivre; Director of MIA, Dr Julia Gonnella; MIA Deputy Director of MIA Learning and Outreach, Salem Abdulla Al Aswad; and Guinness World Record Adjudicator, Pravin Patel. Ahead of the relay, Olivier d'Agay, the great nephew of the book's author and Secretary General of the Antoine de Saint-Exupéry Youth Foundation, addressed particpants and attendees through video.

Al Aswad said: "We are absolutely delighted to have MIA achieve the Guinness World Record for the Most Languages Used in Reading Relay. This achievement is a celebration and relflection of Qatar's multicutlural society and of the many languages that will be spoken during the FIFA World Cup Qatar 2022. A huge thank you to all the participants who worked together to set this record, including Qatar TV who created a perfect programme which will air on television in the coming days.”

Susan Parker-Leavy, Head of Library and her team managed the project and worked with the readers and judges to create an amazing event which shows the importance of reading and libraries in Qatar.

**ENDS**

**Museum of Islamic Art**

Founded in 2008, the Museum of Islamic Art (MIA) was one of the first projects initiated by QM. Designed by the renowned Chinese American architect I. M. Pei, the MIA is a globally acclaimed museum that stands majestically on Doha’s Corniche, with panoramic views of the city’s waterfront. The museum showcases Qatar’s world-class collections of Islamic art spanning some 1,400 years. Representing the full scope of Islamic art from the 7th to the 20th centuries, the MIA collection includes manuscripts, ceramics, metal, glass, ivory, textiles, wood, and precious stones. The works have been collected from three continents, including countries across the Middle East, and reaching as far as Spain and China. MIA presents a changing programme of exhibitions illustrating the heritage of the Islamic world, as well as extensive educational activities for school children and families, making the museum a vital part of the community. The MIA has become a popular museum in the region and internationally, attracting hundreds of thousands of visitors annually. Dr. Julia Gonnella has served as director of the museum since 2017.

**About Qatar Museums**

Qatar Museums (QM), the nation's preeminent institution for art and culture, provides authentic and inspiring cultural experiences through a growing network of museums, heritage sites, festivals, public art installations, and programmes. QM preserves, restores, and expands the nation's cultural offerings and historical sites, sharing art and culture from Qatar, the Middle East, North Africa, and South Asia (MENASA) region with the world and enriching the lives of citizens, residents, and visitors.

Under the patronage of His Highness the Amir, Sheikh Tamim bin Hamad Al Thani, and led by its Chairperson, Her Excellency Sheikha Al Mayassa bint Hamad bin Khalifa Al Thani, QM has made Qatar a vibrant centre for the arts, culture, and education in the Middle East and beyond. QM is integral to the goal of developing an innovative, diverse, and progressive nation, bringing people together to ignite new thinking, spark critical cultural conversations, educate and encourage environmental stewardship and sustainable practices, and amplify the voices of Qatar's people. Since its founding in 2005, QM has overseen the Museum of Islamic Art and MIA Park, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, the National Museum of Qatar, QM Gallery Al Riwaq, QM Gallery Katara, 3-2-1 Qatar Olympic and Sports Museum, and Dadu, Children's Museum of Qatar.

Through its newly created Creative Hub, QM also initiates and supports projects—such as the Fire Station Artist in Residence, the Tasweer Qatar Photo Festival and the creative hub for innovation, fashion and design M7—that nurture artistic talent and create opportunities to build a strong and sustainable cultural infrastructure.

Animating everything that Qatar Museums does is an authentic connection to Qatar and its heritage, a steadfast commitment to inclusivity and accessibility, and a belief in creating value through invention.

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