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## OUR MISSION

The Aga Khan Museum is a vibrant educational institution dedicated to fostering a greater understanding and appreciation of the many major contributions Muslim civilizations have made to world heritage. Through education, research, and collaboration, the Museum fosters dialogue and promotes tolerance and mutual understanding among people.

## LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The Aga Khan Museum is built on land that is and has been under the stewardship of many Indigenous peoples over millennia, including the Anishinaabe, the Haudenosaunee, the Wendat and, most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit Nation. We are grateful for the opportunity to work and live on this land and be in this territory.



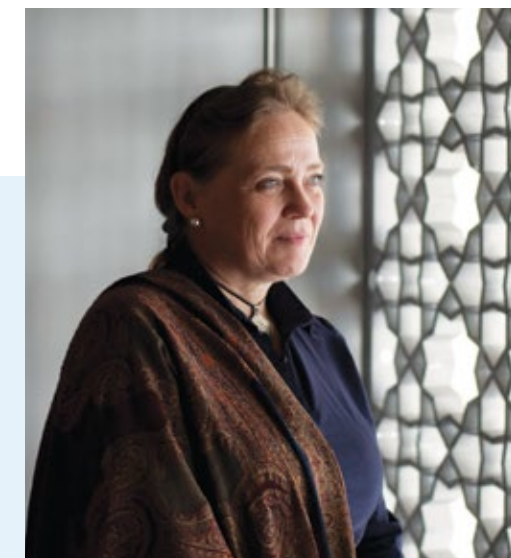
### MESSAGE FROM PRINCE AMYN AGA KHAN, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD

Looking back over the past seven years, witnessing the Aga Khan Museum's ability to grow and evolve in the face of a rapidly changing world has been quite remarkable. In a period of global pandemics and increasing turmoil, the Museum's mandate to foster intercultural understanding is proving more relevant than ever.

Throughout the past year, we have experienced the essential and existential power of art – to offer transformative hope, insights, and productive encounters across and beyond what could be seeming differences. Indeed, the language of the arts speaks to the human condition at large, uniting visitors from different backgrounds around the ties that bind us all.

I am particularly pleased to see how the Museum has grown its impact on its diverse audiences, onsite and online – an effort that could not have come to fruition without the generosity of the Museum's friends, patrons, and donors.

My heartfelt gratitude and appreciation goes out to each and every one of you. I look forward to continuing to expand the Aga Khan Museum's global relevance and impact with your support into the future.



### MESSAGE FROM DR. ULRIKE AL-KHAMIS, DIRECTOR AND CEO

Reflecting on another challenging year, it is remarkable what our team has been able to achieve. From ground-breaking online initiatives to unlocking the potential of our Collection, the Museum has continued to push boundaries and grow its impact. 2021 marked my first year as the Museum's Director and CEO, and it has been a privilege to lead its exciting transformation.

With the international travel of art loans disrupted, our 2021 signature exhibition, *Hidden Stories: Books Along the Silk Roads*, was nevertheless able to be brought to life in collaboration with a host of scholars and institutional partners from Toronto, Canada and the US. Meanwhile, we continued to grow #MuseumWithoutWalls – reaching over six million people worldwide.

Audience appreciation shone through in the sentiments our visitors have shared and in our fundraising success. We will be forever grateful for the astonishing and deeply humbling generosity of our donors and funders.





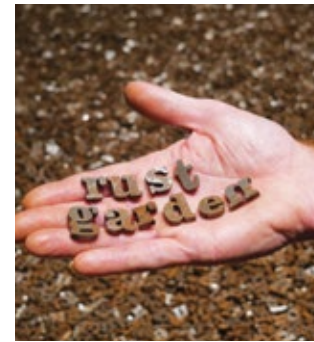
# LIVE AT THE MUSEUM

Framing our understanding of the world through storytelling



“Ekow Nimako’s *Kumbi Saleh 3020 CE* is about **how history has been told** and **whose voices have been empowered to do so**. This riveting, monumental sculpture fundamentally expresses the Museum’s role as a space that celebrates a vast and global mosaic of perspectives on our heritage and our humanity.”

– Dr. Michael Chagnon, Curator



“I’ll never forget seeing my 3-year-old **filled with delight**, skipping through the Atrium and ‘digging’ in the *Rust Garden* to find an ‘S’ for her name!”

– Dr. Hayley Andrew, Exhibitions Manager

**OUR 2021 EXHIBITIONS** told stories about responding to crisis, sharing hopes and anxieties, and making peace with uncertainty. *Hidden Stories: Books Along the Silk Roads* highlighted the knowledge across cultures and the complex realities that connect us across time. Toronto-based artist and biologist Radha Chaddah presented *Act 1 of IAM: Dance of the Molecules*, a collection of COVID-19 stories told through an immersive outdoor dance film. *State of Play*, by artists Jennie Suddick and Anna Rose, revealed the transformative powers of play and the universality of playing. *Rust Garden*, by Matt Donovan and Hallie Siegel, asked us to reconsider notions of Canadian identity. The Afro-futurist work, *Kumbi Saleh 3020 CE (2019)*, by Ghanaian-Canadian LEGO® sculptor Ekow Nimako, delighted all audiences and became a key acquisition in our Permanent Collection. And our inaugural Aga Khan Museum–Delfina Foundation artist-in-residence, Ghazaleh Avarzamani, presented her thought-provoking *\*Terms and Conditions Apply*, exploring the cultural and ethical implications of museum conservation and display.

## FUN FACT!

24 tons of blue rubber mulch and 30 stained glass mosaics, specially designed for the Museum, were installed during Ghazaleh Avarzamani’s exhibition *\*Terms and Conditions Apply*.







**2021 WAS A LANDMARK YEAR** for the Museum's events and performing arts. We engaged audiences around the world with ground-breaking virtual programming, and after reopening, welcomed visitors back to enjoy spectacular live encounters. We partnered with students at Humber College to stage a special student-orchestrated concert performance and documentary screening for our 2021 Intercultural and Creative Music Fellowship. We also held the inaugural live full-group performance of the 14-member Labyrinth Ensemble, featuring the vocal talents of Lamia Yared.



## FUN FACT!

In 2021, a total of 27,708 people attended live stream events and programs hosted in collaboration with the Museum.



**“I’m grateful to know that the love and effort I put into what I do at the Museum will have a positive impact on the world. By building cultural diversity into our programs, we create a sense of belonging and an appreciation for each other’s differences.”**  
 – Shirin Divanbeigi, Digital Learning Officer

**“Planning events in 2021 was a challenging yet satisfying experience.** We continued to work with amazing artists – our virtual creative activities punctuated with moments of live performance – even while we faced constantly changing circumstances. **By turning challenges into new opportunities, we reached a much wider, global audience.**”  
 – Amirali Alibhai, Head of Performing Arts

# TRUTH AND RECONCILIATION



**IN HONOUR OF** the first Canadian National Truth and Reconciliation Day on September 30, 2021, we invited the public to reflect by holding space in our galleries. Toronto artists Matt Donovan and Hallie Siegel’s epic interactive installation, *Rust Garden*, asked visitors to spell out messages with rusted steel letters that blanketed the floor. Mi’gmaq storyteller and musician Darlene Gijuminag and Pakistani film-maker Imran Babur engaged with visitors throughout the day, sharing stories. They were joined by Irish-Anishinaabe artist and dancer Brian Solomon in a ceremonial performance. In the Bellerive Room where a community-based choral response to the first report of the discoveries of buried children at the Kamloops Residential School in British Columbia was screened: The four-minute soundscape, *Lament: Bearing Witness*, represented an intercultural grassroots show of solidarity with Indigenous communities in our collective sorrow and remembrance.





# LEARN

Informing, enriching, and expanding minds at home and around the world



**IN 2021 WE ENGAGED** learners of all ages both locally and around the world with exciting school field trips, courses, tours, family activities, and educational resources. In celebration of Islamic Heritage Month, we welcomed over 12,000 students to the Museum for virtual field trips and programs focused on expanding intercultural knowledge and combatting Islamophobia. Schools reached out to the Museum in unprecedented numbers, and our Adult Education courses – including *Islamic Art 101* and *Islamic Architecture: Past to Present* – engaged 1,500 registrants from 300 locations around the world.

**“This class was the most fun I had all term!”**  
– *On-site student participant*



## FUN FACT!

Over 16,000 students from ages 4–18 visited the Museum in 2021.



“Many of my students are Muslim and speak Arabic. [During our Virtual Visit] they were very **interested to see all of the Muslim artifacts** – they just kept typing ‘that is so cool!’”  
– *Grades 3 and 4 teacher, Mississauga, Ontario*





# #MUSEUMWITHOUTWALLS

Building global communities and telling stories in creative ways



**WE EXPANDED BEYOND** our walls to connect and engage our audiences around the world in new conversations and to share their own perspectives. Pocket Performances let people meet artists in a virtual museum space. Our *Public Curates* initiative asked visitors to share their own thoughts on objects in the Collection. *Global Conversations* offered thought-provoking discussions to an international audience, and our Virtual Family Program featured a host of family activities.



## FUN FACT!

Audiences from more than 110 countries consumed virtual content through our #MuseumWithoutWalls.



**“A huge thank you for turning *Remastered* into a virtual exhibition. I’ve never been able to visit the Museum in person and was excited to find out it was **available to people around the world.**”**  
– *Virtual Museum visitor*

**“Museum visits are so important** [for students], and with the pandemic there haven’t been many in-person opportunities. My students are all learning virtually this year, so having **an opportunity like this to explore another culture is exceptional!**”

– *Grade 8 teacher, Loreville Public School, Brampton, Ontario*





# SITE EXPERIENCE

Creating a lively and collaborative space where we all belong



**WORKING CLOSELY WITH** local and international partners, we hosted innovative on-site celebrations to honour Toronto's rich cultural diversity and tell stories in new and inspiring ways. Our outdoor exhibitions, *Land/s* by Gohar Dashti, presented as part of the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival, *Spring is Here!* presented in partnership with the Aga Khan Park, and *The Silk Road: A Living History*, provided visitors with a safe and engaging way to learn as they strolled through the Park. Our seventh annual Duende Festival showcased some of Canada's greatest flamenco performers. We offered free in-person and online mindfulness sessions in partnership with the YMCA of Greater Toronto, and worked with the City of Toronto and students from the OCAD University to illuminate the Museum with an incredible series of public art projections celebrating identity. We also collaborated with the University of Toronto to explore the untold histories of the Silk Roads with *Hidden Stories: Books Along the Silk Roads* – a historic project featuring a live and virtual exhibition, website, and virtual symposium.

## FUN FACT!

Almost 90,000 virtual and in-person viewers took part in the Museum's on-site and online Performing Arts events.



**“Flamenco is an art form that speaks to many people of different places and walks of life. Through the diversity of its programming, the Museum has become a welcoming venue for the celebration of culture in the eyes of Toronto and the world.”**  
– Carmen Romero, Artistic Director, Duende Flamenco Festival





# WORLDS UNCOVERED

Creating an international stage for the showcasing of unique identities

**OUR CAPTIVATING DOCUMENTARIES,** podcasts, and talks united local and global audiences in a shared cultural experience. We collaborated with documentarians Ankur Malhotra and Ashutosh Sharma to produce *Searching for the Blues*, an insightful docuseries about the alternative roots of Blues music and the “Indian blues,” featuring seminal performances by legendary Sindhi sarangi player Lakha Khan. We also launched our first podcast series, *This Being Human*, featuring 26 extraordinary personalities to showcase the kaleidoscope of Muslim experiences.



“We’re excited to partner with the Aga Khan Museum to **engage listeners** in these ground-breaking interviews and stories that have the **power to positively inspire** and impact our lives.”

– John Ferri, Vice-President, Programming and Content at TVO

“We don’t just want to know what makes us human, but **how we can become better humans** — for ourselves and for others.”

– *Abdul-Rehman Malik, Host of This Being Human*



## FUN FACT!

422 live viewers tuned in for Curator Dr. Michael Chagnon’s virtual Lunchtime Lecture on *Decanting Secrets*.





**16,000+** participants took part in our school programs over the course of the year



**700,000** rusted steel letters were featured in the *Rust Garden* installation



**11.3 MILLION** dollars were raised  
.....  
**\$537,900** donated through our **Year End Campaign**



**1000 YEARS OF HISTORY**

were represented by **OBJECTS** in *Hidden Stories: Books Along the Silk Roads*

**6 MILLION+** people were reached online, **FROM 110 COUNTRIES** around the world



**18,550 VISITORS** came to the Museum **IN PERSON**

(despite it being open for only 50% of the year!)



**12,000+ STUDENTS**



connected with the Museum virtually over three days during Islamic Heritage Month



**600,000+** learners from around the globe were reached by our virtual education programs

**511 EDUCATORS** took part in Islamic Heritage Month

**400+ NEW MEMBERSHIPS** WERE SECURED



**GLOBAL SUSTAINABILITY**

**30+**

existing cases and plinths were repurposed to display objects in the *Hidden Stories: Books Along the Silk Roads* exhibition

**6**

permanent outdoor display structures were installed in the Park, to accommodate changing temporary art installations in future years





# PRIVATE HIRE

Creative unforgettable experiences in extraordinary spaces



**THE MUSEUM IS** a very special place within the surrounding city, a beautiful and unique setting for private and corporate events. We extended an exceptionally warm welcome – a quality our private clients often noted over the course of 2021, when spaces for meaningful, intimate experiences were valued more than ever. Event attendees often noted what inspired a sense of curiosity and a reason to come back: the evocative light that emanates into the glass courtyard, the warm welcome received at our front desk, the whole-hearted hospitality, exhibitions that touched the soul, or the peace and serenity in the Museum and the Aga Khan Park.



## FUN FACT!

In 2021, the Museum hosted more than twice the number of events held in 2020, with more than double the attendees: 72 events and 4,523 people!



**“Our experience yesterday was just excellent, and it was in large part thanks to you and the amazing staff at the Museum. EVERYONE was eager to help us and so supportive and collaborative.”**  
– Private event client

“It is **a privilege to host and stage events in our spaces**. Whether a grand catered affair, a corporate networking event, a school graduation, a non-profit multicultural event, or an intimate, romantic wedding reception, **there is something for everyone.**”  
– Jamica Andani, Event Sales & Accounts Manager



# VOLUNTEERS



**2021 WAS ANOTHER** unusual year, both long-standing and newly recruited volunteers harnessed their energies in welcoming visitors to the Museum in these extraordinary times. They dedicated their efforts, time, and knowledge to make the Museum a safe haven and place of inspiration for everyone who walked through our doors or engaged with us online. We are honoured to say that we can always count on our volunteers to be champions of our mandate and the advocates of our initiatives. We are grateful to them for their enthusiasm, generosity, and commitment to the Museum's visitors and programs. Together we are stronger!

# THE AGA KHAN PARK AND THE ISMAILI CENTRE TORONTO

**IN 2021 WE DEEPENED** our partnership with the Aga Khan Park and the Ismaili Centre, Toronto (ICT). Through coordinating our initiatives, we aimed to enhance the experiences of our shared visitors. Like the Aga Khan Park, which embraces our two buildings and offers a place of respite from the surrounding city, our partnership proved essential for turning the challenges of a difficult year into engaging and safe activities for our audiences, including:

A pop-up COVID-19 vaccination clinic, hosted in partnership with Michael Garron Hospital. Thanks to the support of hundreds of volunteers, we supported local communities by vaccinating over 1,400 people.

*Land/s* by Gohar Dashti was presented as part of the Scotiabank CONTACT Photography Festival. The exhibition investigated the power of nature to make people feel at home, no matter where they find themselves on Earth.

*The Silk Road: A Living History*, by British explorer, writer, and photographer Christopher Wilton-Steer, documents his 2019 expedition along the Silk Road, from Venice to Beijing. The large-scale outdoor exhibition gave visual expression to the cultural unity of this route's incredible locations and people.

"I am honored to volunteer at the Aga Khan Museum. The magnetic impact of the enchanting and **charismatic ambiance of the Museum** has given me a unique opportunity to **connect with the wider diverse communities.**"

– Dr. Mehboobali Ajani

"I've seen tears in the eyes of one visitor on a tour, and I've seen **the love the volunteers have for their Museum.** It's like the tenacity a mother has for her child – she keeps an eye on it and will do what it takes to care for it."

– Navyn Naran

**"Coming to the Museum is like coming home — safe, warm, and inviting.** I feel immense pride in seeing visitors from other lands who made it a priority to visit the Museum."

– Iffat Ladha, Volunteer





# LAPIS DIGITAL BENEFIT

## ABOUT THE LAPIS DIGITAL BENEFIT

On Friday, October 1, 2021, the Aga Khan Museum proudly presented the *Lapis Digital Benefit: Journey Beyond*. A celebration of how art transcends borders and boundaries, the event was enjoyed by thousands of viewers from 38 countries and featured eight artists from North America, East and South Asia, the Middle East, and the Iberian Peninsula.

Through the generous support of our sponsors and donors, we raised over \$800,000. These funds support the Museum's educational mandate, which allows us to bring impactful and thought-provoking performances, courses and workshops, conversations with artistic leaders and global thinkers, and transformative experiences to audiences at home and around the globe.



**“The design of the event**—connecting diverse segments to pieces within the Museum **was brilliant**. The segment on Indigenous experiences was enriching and the Silk Road segment bringing together the sitar and pipa was truly a journey back in time. **I look forward to next year’s event!**” – *Viewer Feedback*

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## FEATURING

Abdul-Rehman Mailk (Host and Emcee)  
Matt Donovan and Hallie Siegel  
Darlene Gijuminag  
Anwar Khurshid  
Carmen Romero  
Majd Sekkar  
Ali Sethi  
Wen Zhao

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE WITH YOUR SUPPORT

In 2021, you helped us to create a place of intercultural encounters and learning where everyone is welcome. We are incredibly grateful for the continued trust of our supporters, who propel us forward and help us ensure the Museum's future success. Together we are enriching students' learning, featuring emerging performers on our stage, and mounting thought-provoking exhibitions. Your overwhelming support is truly inspiring and strengthens our commitment to connect cultures through the arts.

With the generous contributions of our Friends, Patrons, donors, volunteers, and partners, we raised an unprecedented \$11.3 million. We look forward to sharing in the Museum's future accomplishments with you and are excited about what we can achieve together. Thank you!

## ENGAGING OUR SUPPORTERS

From our virtual exhibition openings to Patron Appreciation Days, we connected with more than 1,000 supporters, over 19 events both in person and online. Supporters near and far were able to hear from Museum curators, engage with artists, and experience the Museum like never before. We also extend our most sincere thanks to the UK and GSA chapters of the Patrons' program for their tremendous work in fostering connections and engaging supporters. As we reimagine our Global Donor engagement, we are excited to continue working with these regions through our Global Patrons programming, and visiting our supporters across the globe very soon.



# THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

We gratefully acknowledge the incredible generosity of the following individuals and institutions, who supported the Museum in 2021. Your inspiring commitment is critical to sustaining the high quality of our collection, exhibitions, and programs, and has helped to extend our reach to communities around the globe.

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Lehjatali and Roshan Momin

Tajddin A. and Zarina T. Momin  
Zulfiqar Ali Momin and  
Gulnar Z. Momin  
Noor Moosa and Leena Jiwani  
Marina Mussani and Dr. Nizar Mussani  
Dr. Noor Nagji and Salim Moosa  
Alysha Najak-Bandali and  
Imran Bandali  
Al and Shaherose Nanji  
Khatoon Nanji and Shelina Kassum  
Siraj and Azra Narsi  
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Karim Nensi and Shezleen Vellani  
Abdul Rashid and Dilshad Noorani  
Amir and Shabnam Noorani  
Rahim and Zeeshan Noorani  
Nasir S. Noormohamed and  
Tazmin Merali

Nadia and Sharukh Palsetia  
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Mehmood Sohani and Saleem Ali  
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Jamal and Shereza Tajuddin  
Abdullah Rehman Tharoo and  
Mumtaz Bandedali Tharoo  
Ahmed and Kamal Ukani  
Nazir and Yasmin Valani  
Minhas and Farzana Vellani  
Riyaz and Azmina Virani  
Suleman Virani  
Gulshan Virji  
Yasmin and Zulfiqar Walji  
Faizan and Arif Wastani  
Anonymous (26)



“We felt **we had a responsibility to help promote Muslim culture by supporting the Aga Khan Museum.** We’re excited and grateful that the Museum represents the first project initiated by His Highness in North America to **help support education about Islamic history and culture.** We spent a whole afternoon touring the Museum, finding the staff and many volunteers to be welcoming, helpful, and kind. **The Museum is a leading pioneer in fostering a better image of Islam,** creating cultural connections, educating the world about our robust history and contributions to society, and supporting the current endeavours of Muslim artists and creators.”  
– *Shafiq, Farzana, Umair and Sabiha Nasser*  
Dallas, Texas, Major Gift Donors





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The generosity of our supporters and their belief in our mission allow us to act as a platform for mutual understanding between cultures, to be a centre of education and learning, and to foster a greater appreciation of the contributions that Muslim arts and culture have and continue to make to world heritage.

You can **contribute in different ways by becoming a Friend or Patron, by making a donation, or becoming a volunteer. Please visit [agakhanmuseum.org/support](https://agakhanmuseum.org/support)** to learn more. Thank you for your support!



# STAFF REFLECTIONS

“My experiences at the Museum last year gave me a **new perspective on what teamwork really means**. Our commitment towards a common goal – especially during a challenging time – is what helps a team succeed!”

– Ann Marie Gittens, Floor Manager

“I’m inspired by **our remarkable community of employees, volunteers, visitors, and supporters** who, through difficult times, have united and remained committed to helping the Museum shine in the way it deserves.”

– Chelsea Jorge, Marketing and Digital Officer

“Despite the pandemic restrictions, we found **creative ways to bring the Museum to our visitors** and **reach out to new audiences**.”

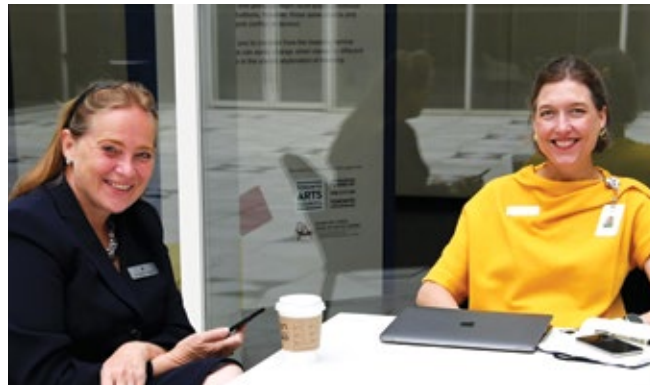
– Bitu Pourvash, Assistant Curator

“I always feel a **sense of comfort** when I walk into the Museum, and **I infuse that same feeling into our dishes at the Diwan Restaurant**. I’m proud to create cuisine that’s as much a part of the Museum experience as the art. For *The Silk Road: A Living History*, our menu combined dishes from Italy all the way to East Asia. **We take people on a journey and connect cultures through food.**”

– Chef Shen Ousmand, Executive Chef, Diwan

“The Education team’s true **spirit and ingenuity energized me for a hopeful future of global programming**. For the first time, **we engaged and inspired** 16,000 participants around the world.”

– Salima Kassam-Habib, Education and Public Engagement Program Officer



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