



Prince Amyn Aga Khan attends the Abida Parveen fundraising concert on May 15, 2016.

Message from Prince Amyn Aga Khan Chairman of the Board

Museums have a unique role and responsibility to lead their visitors to apprehend the dialogues and exchanges that have inspired the arts from seemingly far-flung and diverse cultures, to see and to recognize that we share a common heritage, the heritage of the human heart, which underlies all art.

One of the Aga Khan Museum's main purposes is thus to explore the arts and cultures of the highly diverse civilizations that embrace Islam. It was an ambitious aim when we opened our doors two years ago, and it continues to be so.

It is that ambition which underpins our exhibition *Syria: A Living History*. We have brought together here seven international partners — including the Louvre in Paris, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Museum of Islamic Art and the Vorderasiatisches Museum, both in Berlin, and the Atassi Foundation in Dubai — to provide, I believe for the first time since the civil war in Syria began, the chance to learn and appreciate the history of a region that was once the beating heart of civilization. We were particularly honoured to have UNESCO extend its patronage to the exhibition. For a young museum to create an exhibition of this significance is a testament to the possibilities inherent to all museums.

In 2016, our work at the Aga Khan Museum was predicated on the generous support of donors and sponsors, both locally and internationally. Some gave in excess of \$1 million; others, masterpieces. Their magnanimous contributions here helped create exhibitions that have enhanced the reputation and importance of this institution worldwide. I would like to extend to them our most sincere gratitude. We are a young museum and we have a need to benefit from the support of our friends.

The arts have a privileged role to play in fostering dialogue and understanding. Speaking for myself, I can only say how gratifying it is to feel that the Aga Khan Museum is doing its best to illuminate, to bring forward the commonalities of our universal heritage to unite us. I look to the future with much anticipation.

Prince Amyn Aga Khan

Chairman of the Board



The Honourable Mélanie Joly, Minister of Canadian Heritage, and Henry Kim enjoy a preview of *Syria*: A Living History on October 13, 2016.

Message from Henry S. Kim Director and CEO

At the Museum every day, and in Toronto more generally, we hear genuine curiosity about the arts and culture of Muslim civilizations, and a desire to understand more. There is no greater satisfaction than meeting that curiosity with a rich, varied exhibition; one that collectively lifts the curtain on the people in the news and on the traditions and culture obscured by war.

The public response, media attention, and critical acclaim for the Museum's world-premiere exhibition *Syria: A Living History* confirms my strongly held belief that museums, like countries, can be responsive; they can be brave; and, despite growing instability in many parts of the world, they can build bridges between the East and the West.

In the Museum's transformational second year, we truly lived our mission to spark dialogue between cultures through art. We continue to lay down deep roots in Toronto and the arts and culture community, which was reflected in the breadth and depth of our partners.

Syria: A Living History would not have been possible without the patronage of UNESCO, the support of our many partners, and the contributions of Mohammad and Najla Al Zaibak. Our lecture series, Islam and Muslims in the 21st Century, would not exist without The Globe and Mail.

The sold-out performance of the radiant poet and singer Abida Parveen would not have happened without our first venue partner, Roy Thompson Hall. More broadly, we have become part of Toronto's culture firmament, participating in annual celebrations that bring communities together, such as Nuit Blanche, Summerlicious and Winterlicious, and Doors Open Toronto.

As I reflect on the fullness of our 2016 programming, I am humbled by how many intelligent and dedicated people are actively engaged to consistently deliver works of excellence. To the many organizations and individuals, our devoted volunteers, and the professionals who support our fundraising and strategic initiatives: for your extraordinary efforts and commensurate results, we are immensely grateful. I am also delighted to have the opportunity to thank and recognize the generosity of our valued donors and supporters. Finally, I am especially proud of the collaboration of our Museum teams who came together to present our Collection, exhibitions, and their accompanying programming in unprecedented ways.

Henry S. Kim

Director and CEO





A visitor leaves a message of hope on a wall decorated with a graphic reproduction of Gustav Klimt's The Kiss by Syrian artist Tammam Azzam in Syria: A Living History.



A PANORAMA OF GLOBAL HERITAGE

In an unprecedented partnership between seven intstitutional partners including the Royal Ontario Museum, Toronto; the Museum of Islamic Art, Berlin; the Vorderasiatisches Museum, Berlin; the Louvre, Paris; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Atassi Foundation, Dubai; and the Marshall and Marilyn R. Wolf Collection, Toronto, *Syria: A Living History* brought together 48 pieces, both art and artifact, that encompassed centuries of Syria's glorious past.

Arranged thematically around ideas that span across all periods of Syrian history, the popular exhibition included objects ranging from an 8th- or 9th-century carved ivory lion's head to contemporary paintings produced just in the last decade. At the end of the exhibition, visitors were invited to write messages of hope for Syrians and to pin them to Tammam Azzam's image of a bullet-ridden building in Damascus, superimposed with Gustav Klimt's *The Kiss*.

"This is a poignant, cathartic show. The visitor can't help feeling awe and veneration for the immortal works of art mixed with a bittersweet sense of what humans are capable of — at their best and worst." – Melik Kaylan, The Wall Street Journal (Syria: A Living History)

Highlights



Heritage and Conflict: Syria's Battle to Save Its Past October 16, 2016

Dr. Maamoun Abdulkarim, Syria's Director-General of Antiquities and Museums, delivered our second Annual Lecture to an enthusiastic audience.



Syria's Art and Architecture: A Multicultural History October 29 to 30, 2016

In this symposium co-organized with Professor Nasser Rabbat, 10 international scholars gave illustrated presentations on their research covering Syria's heritage.



Aleppo: A City and Its Architecture
November 13, 2016

The Nai Syrian Children's Choir, comprised of refugee children, celebrated Aleppo's musical traditions and introduced a lecture on the city by historian Dr. Ross Burns.



Oh My Sweet Land November 18 to 20, 2016

Amir Nizar Zuabi's astonishing one-person play was performed in the United Kingdom as part of the Nour Festival in Kensington, and also in Toronto, where it was the Museum's first live theatre show in our restaurant, Diwan.



*Home Within*November 26 to 27, 2016

Kinan Azmeh and Kevork Mourad's stunning visual arts and music collaboration garnered public praise and mainstream media coverage.



Arabica Coffee House Concert
December 11, 2016

The Damascene panels in Diwan served as the ideal backdrop for the world-premiere performance of the Al Qahwa Ensemble.

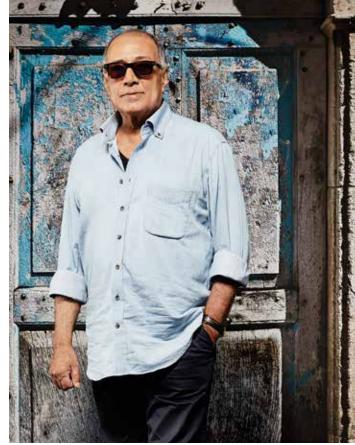


ABBAS KIAROSTAMI: DOORS WITHOUT KEYS

November 21, 2015 to March 28, 2016

A journey through memory and imagination, the Museum's first solo exhibition, co-curated by Amirali Alibhai (Head of Performing Arts), offered visitors a rare opportunity to explore the prolific multidisciplinary practice of renowned late Iranian photographer, poet, and filmmaker Abbas Kiarostami.

Featuring images of weathered doors that witnessed many lives lived behind, through, and before their existence, Kiarostami's *Doors Without Keys* offered visitors a hope of entry and escape, transcending the boundaries of time and place. It was a privilege and an honour to help Kiarostami realize what would be his final photography installation and its accompanying film series at the Aga Khan Museum.



"The installation is about looking, about pausing to look, about using closed doors as a medium to heighten perception and stimulate your own imagination."

- James Adams, The Globe and Mail (Doors Without Keys)

Highlights



A City Transformed: Images of Istanbul Then and Now February 6, 2015 to June 26, 2016

Presented in collaboration with Turkish art collector Ömer M. Koç and photographer Murat Germen, and co-curated by Dr. Filiz Çakır Phillip and Bahattin Öztuncay, *A City Transformed* immersed visitors in the past, present, and future of Istanbul.



Álvaro Siza: Gateway to the Alhambra July 23, 2016 to January 8, 2017

A joint project between the Aedes Architecture Forum, Berlin and the Patronato of the Alhambra and Generalife, Granada, our first architecturally-focused exhibition, curated by António Choupina.



Marvellous Creatures: Animals in Islamic Art May 7 to September 11, 2016

Originally organized and exhibited at the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar, expanded with loans from international institutions, and curated by Dr. Filiz Çakır Phillip, this exhibition celebrated the real and mythical animals of classic literature.



Parviz Tanavoli September 13, 2016 to October 2, 2017

Horizontal Lovers — making its public debut — is one of three sculptural installations on display in the Aga Khan Park for all to enjoy.



collectors and institutions from around the world, our critically acclaimed exhibitions explored the intersections between art and life.

The first solo artist exhibition at the Aga Khan Museum,

Doors Without Keys brought together over two decades of photography and video by renowned artist Abbas Kiarostami.



TRAY

Gujarat, India, late 16th–early 17th century Mother-of-pearl, black lacquer, wood; overlaid. 2016.1.1 Gift from Sadruddin Hashwani and Family

A new acquisition, this unique tray (page 9) depicts figurative elements demonstrating Indian, Persian, and European influences. Nine angels dressed in Persian and Indian costumes encircle a courtly pavilion, inspired by neo-classical architecture. This tray is an eclectic piece that is a perfect fit for the Museum's Permanent Collection as it truly demonstrates the cross-cultural exchange of art and ideas between regions of the East and the West.

"Not only is it beyond beautiful both inside and outside... it truly shows that Islamic culture shines with pluralism and displays a great passion for art, literature, and knowledge sharing." – Visitor

Additional Acquisitions



Detail of The King Addressing His Three Sons

Folio from a manuscript of *Masnavi-i Ma'navi* (The Spiritual Couplets) by Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 1273) Iran, ca. 1530. Opaque watercolour, ink, and gold on paper. 2016.3.1 Purchased with funds provided by Karim and Shainoor Khoja, Moez and Sultana Mangalji, and Minhas and Farzana Vellani



Detail of Zal by Rudabeh's Castle

Folio from a manuscript of Shahnam

Folio from a manuscript of Shahnameh (Book of Kings), by Firdausi (d. 1020) India, ca. 1605–10. Opaque watercolour ink, and gold on paper. 2016.4.1 Purchased with funds provided by The Khimji Foundation and Bashir Nathoo and Family



Bowl

Damascus, Syria, mid-13th century Brass, silver-inlaid. 2016.4.2 Purchased with funds provided by The Khimji Foundation and Bashir Nathoo and Family



smail Gulgee (d. 2007)

Detail of Portrait of a Temple Dancer Pakistan, ca. 1960s. Lapis lazuli mosaic 2016.5.1

Donated by Dr. Shiraz Habib Kassam and Naseem Manji Kassam

Notable Loans



Qur'an Leaf Palimpsest Probably Medina, Saudi Arabia,

Probably Medina, Saudi Arabia mid-7th century. Ink on vellum On loan from The Rose Trust



Parviz Tanavoli

Poet In Love, 2009

Big Heech, 2014 Stainless steel

Horizontal Lovers, 2016 Bronze

Loans of Parviz Tanavoli's sculptures supported by Karim and Shainoor Khoja, Moez and Sultana Mangalji, and Minhas and Farzana Vellani



obes

Central Asia, 19th century Silk, cotton textiles; various techniques On loan from the Marshall and Marilyn R. Wolf Collection



GREAT POETS SERIES: ABIDA PARVEEN

May 15, 2016

Headlining our Great Poets Series, the extraordinary Abida Parveen took to the North American stage for the first time in nearly a decade, performing at a sold-out show in Roy Thomson Hall.

There could be no better artist to headline the Museum's first venue partnership. Described by *The Guardian* as "the greatest female Sufi singer in history," Parveen has amassed legions of fans worldwide over four decades. "I've seen people in the West emotionally moved by my performances because the music has touched their spirits, which are the same in all of us," Parveen said. "When the sun shines, it doesn't discriminate among people — the light reaches everyone."

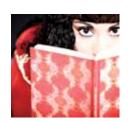


In Spring of 2016, the Aga Khan Museum partnered with Roy Thomson Hall for a rare Toronto performance by Sufi singer Abida Parveen.

"For a moment on Sunday, the intellectual question of multiculturalism and human unity will be lost in the appreciation of the power of music – the greatest universalizing medium of them all."

- Robert Harris, *The Globe and Mail* (Great Poets Series: Abida Parveen)

Highlights



Great Poets Series
January 23 to May 15, 2016

This five-part series featured sold-out performances by poets from all over the world, including South Asia, Iran, Turkey, and Spain.



Constantinople June 6, 2016

In our first performing arts event in partnership with Asia Society, Houston, the Montreal-based group Constantinople performed classical 16th-century Persian poetry.



Arias and Magams
October 29, 2016

Syria's first opera singer Lubana Al Quntar, presented a brilliant journey through three centuries of Arabic music traditions.



Tales of Two Cities: The Leipzig-Damascus Coffee House December 9, 2016

Our partnership with the Tafelmusik Ensemble delivered a multimedia concert — the recording of which will be distributed globally with the Museum as an accredited partner.



FINDING HOME: PERSONAL JOURNEYS AND VISUAL NARRATIVES

December 13, 2016 to January 29, 2017

Developed in partnership with artist-educators and supported by a grant from the Ontario Arts Council, Finding Home welcomed more than 200 students from surrounding schools to celebrate the public display of their artistic re-creations of "home" in the Museum's Education Centre.

ISLAM AND MUSLIMS IN THE 21ST CENTURY

April 17 to July 10, 2016

Contemporary world issues were the focus of our first signature lecture series, which featured high-profile speakers from institutions and publications such as Harvard University, University of Toronto, *The Globe and Mail*, and *Toronto Star*.

"Their displays — all contained within 8-by-11 inch structures — amazed me. They were filled with dreams, fantasies, longing and even pride: this is how we cooked, this is where we played, this is how we celebrated."

- Judith Timson, Toronto Star (Finding Home)

Highlights



Science and Religion in Islam: Conflict or Creative Engagement? April 20, 2016

Using manuscripts from our Collection, Professor Jamil Ragep traced the value of science as an enterprise in premodern Islam. This lecture was part of the *Inspired by Signs* Lecture Series produced in partnership with the Pontifical Institute, Toronto.



The Persian Romance of Alexander the Great May 25, 2016

Blending sober history with heroic tales, historian and professor Michael Barry bridged the concepts of art, mysticism, and poetry in this illustrated talk.



The Alhambra and Its Gardens: Reflections of the Past August 10, 2016

D. Fairchild Ruggles reimagined the Alhambra's dramatic evolution from an abandoned site to a place of elegantly ornamented buildings and beautiful gardens.



The Reopening of the Museum of Islamic Art, Cairo November 26, 2016

Dr. Ahmad al-Shoky, Director General of the Museum of Islamic Art in Cairo, spoke about the reconstruction of the museum after it was damaged considerably in 2014.

Publications

Syria: A Living History Catalogue of exhibition held at the Aga Khan Museum. 2016.

Home Ground: Canadian Perspectives

Publication of the proceedings of the symposium held on Dec. 6, 2016. Asian Diasporic Visual Cultures and the Americas: 2.3, pages 249–322 (Brill Journal).

Notable Addition to the Library

A Survey of Persian Art from Prehistoric Times to the Present

Arthur Upham Pope and Phyllis Ackerman (eds.)

Edition De Luxe, three volumes text and six volumes plates mounted looseleaf within boxes

London; New York: Oxford University Press, 1938-1939 Donated by Joan C. Bismillah in memory of her husband, Dr. Abdul Hak Bismillah

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

In 2016, the Museum achieved continuing success with its community outreach programs, including uptake of both the Museum + Arts Pass and Cultural Access Pass programs, which brought more than 8,000 and nearly 700 guests to the Museum, respectively. The past year also introduced new outreach programs at the Museum, which have already made a significant impact on the community.

Visitors line up outside the Aga Khan Museum during Doors Open Toronto on May 28, 2016.

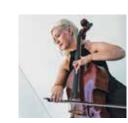
SYRIAN SPECIAL ACCESS PROGRAM

November 2016 to February 2017

Generously supported by grants from the Bay Tree Foundation and the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and a donation by Mohammad and Najla Al Zaibak, the Special Access Program provided free admission into our galleries to newly-arrived Syrians and their host families. In just the first six weeks, more than 400 tickets were redeemed by those eligible for the program.

"Coming from Syria, we never knew about all these details, so this is a great opportunity to learn more about our country." – Ziad Al Saleh, Syrian newcomer

Highlights



Pop-Up Performances

Generously supported by TD Bank Group, our successful inaugural year of Pop-Up Performances saw emerging artists animate accessible spaces in the Museum and the Aga Khan Park for visitors to enjoy on weekends and during special events.



AKTC Award for Architecture

400

SYRIAN ACCESS

PROGRAM (NOV-DEC)

In May of 2016, 19 shortlisted projects for the 2016 Aga Khan Award for Architecture were announced at the Aga Khan Museum, as well as in London and Dubai.



Cultural Hotspot

The Museum and Park partnered with City of Toronto's Cultural Hotspot initiative, aimed at highlighting art and culture in North York. Our signature project, Festival of Flight, attracted 2,500 people to a weekend of exploration.



Nuit Blanche

The Aga Khan Museum, Aga Khan Park, and Ismaili Centre, Toronto participated in Nuit Blanche, Toronto's annual all-night art event, for the first time. The event saw over 4,000 attendees visit throughout the evening.





4,000

ATTENDEES FOR NUIT BLANCHE

2,500

VISITORS DURING FESTIVAL OF FLIGHT



18,000

VISITORS ON FREE WEDNESDAYS





"Thank you for . . . your commitment to excellence. The Museum was an ideal location for our program and your team really brought it all together. For that, we are truly grateful."

- Director of Events, Harvard University

AGA KHAN MUSEUM WEDDINGS

The launch of Aga Khan Museum Weddings in 2016 continues to promote the Museum, its venues, and its services to a new market of wedding planners, wedding shows, and engaged couples through 2017 and beyond. As a result of this initiative, the Museum's light-filled courtyard was highlighted throughout 16 pages of stunning photography in the Winter/Spring 2017 issue of *WedLuxe*, Canada's luxury wedding magazine — reinforcing the endless possibilities of our space.

Highlights



The Aga Khan Museum Shop

The Museum Shop continued to market products from all over the globe. Upcycled glassware sourced from Syrian artistans complemented our exhibition on Syria and garnered praise across mainstream media channels. The Shop's "pop-up" debut at the Jubilee Games and Toronto's Royal Winter Fair promoted continued awareness and success of our products.



Corporate and Social Events

Corporate event sales expanded in 2016 to include a broad range of local, national, and international business customers — including such vendors as Tourism Toronto and the International Live Event Association, as well as initiatives with bus tour companies and special conferences.



Diwan Restaurant and Courtyard Café

Food and beverage sales were robust at both Diwan and at the Courtyard Café. Diwan's unique and beautiful decor is becoming a "must-see" aspect of the dining experience, gaining recognitionon across the country. A prix fixe Thanksgiving lunch at the Courtyard Café and lively Patio Nights at Diwan demonstrated the versatility of the Museum's dining spaces, and welcomed visitors to enjoy new menu items.







AGA KHAN MUSEUM GOES GLOBAL

One of the major ways the Museum continued its global engagement through 2016 was by presenting full-length videos of our popular lectures, conferences, and symposia online for all to enjoy — including our Islam and Muslims in the 21st Century lecture series, our Annual Lecture, opening speeches during the *Syria: A Living History* exhibition preview event, and highlights from Duende, the Museum's Flamenco festival.

Highlights



Constantinople June 6, 2016

An introductory journey into music and poetry from the Safavid era of Persian culture, Constantinople was presented exclusively in Houston, United States.



Oh My Sweet Land November 1, 2016

This intimate and powerful show put a personal face on the Syrian crisis for audiences at the Delfina Foundation and the Ismaili Centre in London.



Patrons' Reception July 28, 2016

A celebratory event for all international supporters who attended the Jubilee Games was hosted in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. Additional receptions were also held throughout the year in Dallas, Houston, Atlanta, London, Vancouver, Red Deer, and Edmonton.



Aleppo: A City and Its Architecture November 13, November 15, and November 17, 2016

Presented by historian Dr. Ross Burns in both Toronto and Vancouver, Canada, as well as in Houston, United States, this illustrated talk was our first travelling program.

The annual support received from our Friends and Patrons makes it possible for the Museum to sustain and grow its programming, both in Toronto and abroad. We are proud to commemorate what has been accomplished in 2016 and extend our immense gratitude to our global network of supporters.



Staff and volunteers at the Museum work closely as a dynamic team.



Volunteers have said they enjoy giving their time to the Museum, as it brings joy to others, as well as themselves.

300

VOLUNTEERS
ENGAGED

36,000

HOURS DEDICATED 2,000

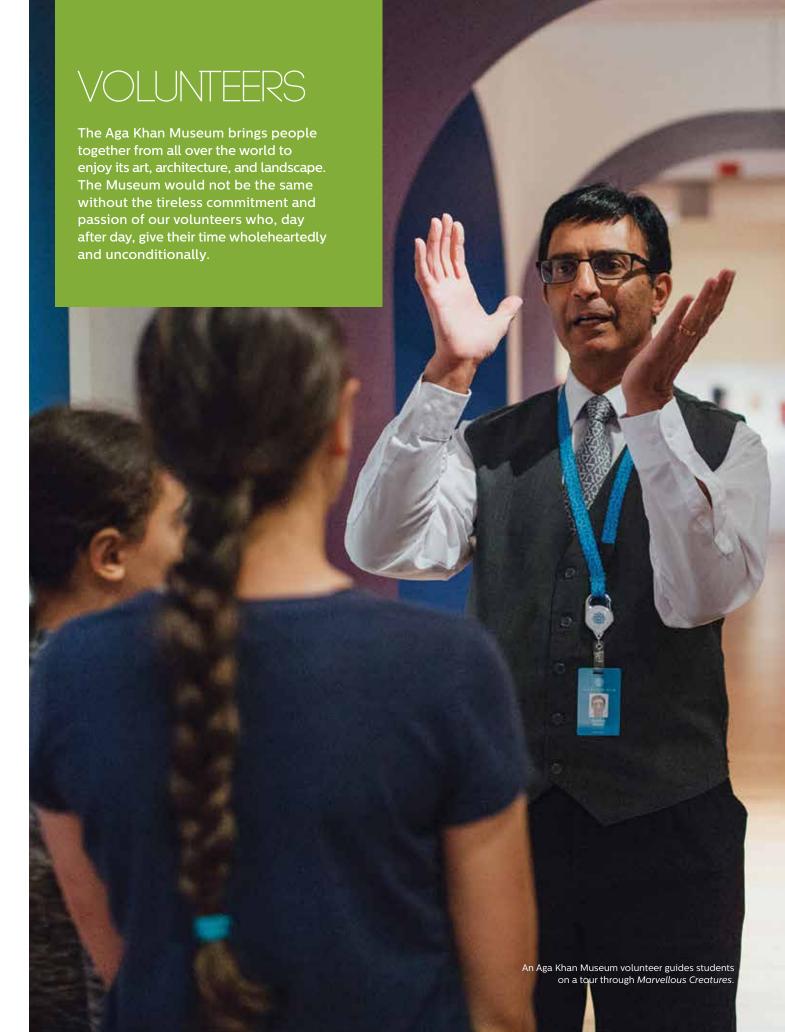
TOURS CONDUCTED

Our visitor services, Museum Shop, and special events volunteers welcomed 138,000 visitors to the Museum. Our volunteer educators engaged 32,000 visitors with the Museum's artifacts and architecture. Opportunities for volunteering remotely were embraced by several project-based professional volunteer advisors who furthered the national and international initiatives of the Museum, and also by nearly 400 North American volunteers who supported the Museum during Patrons' Drives and fundraising events, helping to strengthen our global network.

Early in the year, staff and volunteers came together to celebrate new beginnings and our shared successes. Also in 2016, we streamlined our volunteer engagement process and introduced a refresher training course for frontline volunteers as part of our continuing efforts to provide personal growth and professional success to our volunteers.

"To be surrounded by amazing artworks and artifacts never ceases to enliven my day and would do so, I think, for anybody that may also be interested in volunteering at the Museum. I know it has changed my life."

- Shirin Walani, volunteer



KEY SUPPORTERS

The Museum relies on the invaluable support of many individuals and organizations to achieve our mission and vision, and we would like to acknowledge our most generous supporters. The following have provided support of \$25,000 or more in 2016:

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On behalf of the Museum, Henry S. Kim, Director and CEO, acknowledges and appreciates the tremendous support received at the Director's Circle level (\$25,000) in 2016.

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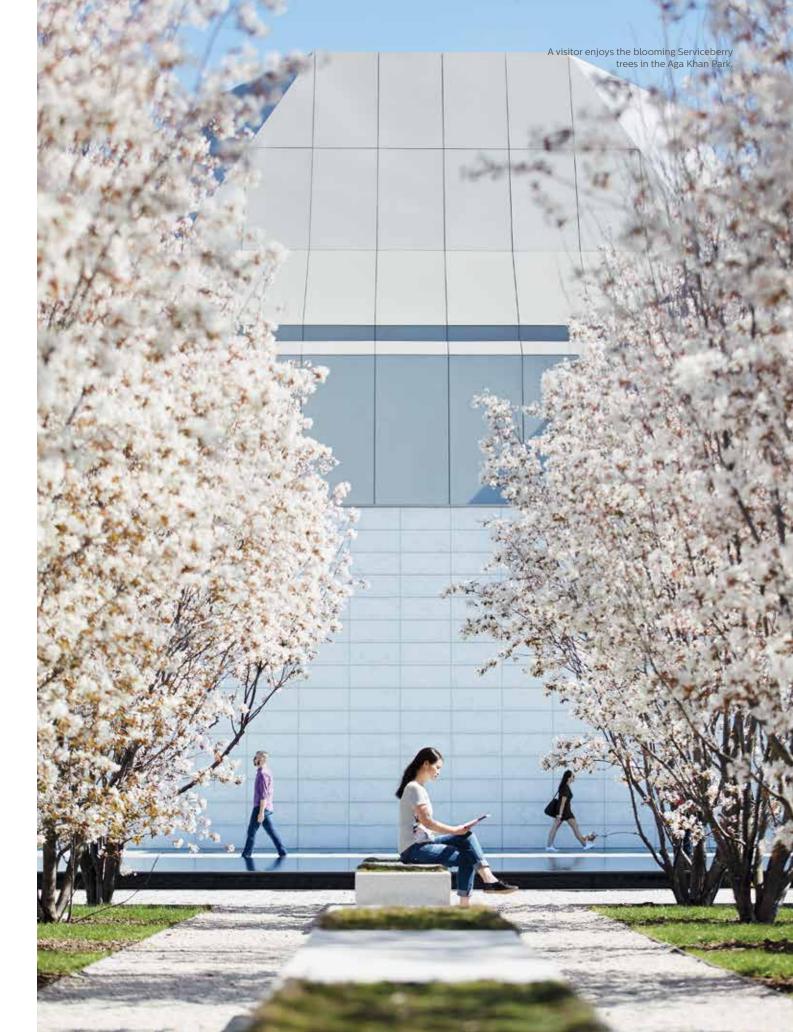
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