



Pushing Boundaries, Testing Limits *Home Ground: Contemporary Art from the Barjeel Art Foundation* Opens July 25 at the Aga Khan Museum

Toronto, 2015 – A powerful collection of contemporary works from the Middle East and North Africa will be presented together in the exhibition *Home Ground: Contemporary Art from the Barjeel Art Foundation* at the Aga Khan Museum. On display from July 25, 2015 to January 3, 2016, the exhibition is the result of an unprecedented partnership between the Aga Khan Museum and the Barjeel Art Foundation (Sharjah, UAE) established by Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi.

Home Ground: Contemporary Art from the Barjeel Art Foundation is remarkable in its variety. Its more than 20 works by 12 artists run the gamut from photography and video to installation, sculpture to painting. These works are united by an awareness of struggle – the struggle crossing geopolitical borders; the struggle forging an identity in an ever-shifting world; and the inherent struggle of being an artist. Participating artists are Raafat Ishak (b. Cairo), Youssef Nabil (b. Cairo), Dia al-Azzawi (b. Baghdad), Adel Abidin (b. Baghdad), Charbel-joseph H. Boutros (b. Mount Lebanon), Mohamad-Said Baalbaki (b. Beirut), Mona Hatoum (b. Beirut), Manal al-Dowayan (b. Dhahran), Khaled Jarrar (b. Jenin), Jawad al-Malhi (b. Jerusalem), Larissa Sansour (b. Jerusalem), and Asim Abu Shaqra (b. Umm el-Fahm). The exhibition is guest curated by Suheyla Takesh, Curator and Exhibitions Manager of the Barjeel Art Foundation.

Highlights of the exhibition:

- Khaled Jarrar's ***Volleyball*** offers a poetic response to conversations held with Palestinian children playing by a section of the separation wall near Ramallah.
- Manal al-Dowayan's ***Suspended Together*** subtly critiques the position of women in contemporary Saudi society.
- Adel Abidin's video ***Memorial*** explores how ordinary life is violated by political events and the First Gulf War.
- Raafat Ishak's ***Responses to an Immigration Request from One Hundred and Ninety-Four Governments*** serves as a witty but poignant testament both to challenges experienced by many immigrants and to the creativity of artists worldwide.

Among the programs planned during the exhibition are a curator's tour by Suheyla Takesh, Curator and Exhibitions Manager of the Barjeel Art Foundation, and a talk by Sultan Sooud Al Qassemi. On the stage of the Aga Khan Museum Auditorium, an Arab Jazz series launches in September, featuring the Iraqi-American trumpeter Amir ElSaffar. Full details of all exhibition-related programs and events are available at agakhanmuseum.org.

This exhibition is generously supported by the Hashoo Foundation, Greater Houston Retailers Cooperative Association, Inc. and Nadir Badruddin & Family. The Canadian Arab Institute is a community partner.

The Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, Canada has been established and developed by the Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC), which is an agency of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN). The Museum's mission is to foster a greater understanding and appreciation of the contribution that Muslim civilizations have made to world heritage. Its stunning building, designed by Japanese architect Fumihiko Maki, is home to two floors of exhibition space, a 350-seat auditorium, classrooms, and public areas that accommodate innovative programming for all ages and interests.

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