

Your summer begins now!
Welcome back to the Aga Khan Museum

Sunday, July 25: Doors open to the public!

Toronto — July 19, 2021 — Treat yourself to a joyous, fulfilling day of arts and culture at the Aga Khan Museum, which opens its doors to the public on Sunday, July 25. Aga Khan Museum Patrons will have the chance to enjoy advance access to the Museum on July 22, and Friends and Patrons will have advance access on July 23 and 24.

Explore our ground-breaking and thought-provoking exhibitions and displays, including *Remastered*, *Faig Ahmed: Dissolving Order*, and the *Bloom* rotation of our Museum Collection. Be the first to see our fantastic new acquisition, *Kumbi Saleh 3020 CE*, a 30-square-foot, black LEGO®, Afrofuturistic vision of an ancient African capital, by Ghanaian-Torontonian artist Ekow Nimako, at the heart of our Permanent Gallery. Rekindle the child in you with *State of Play* – a contemporary art installation by artists Jenny Suddick and Anna Rose – all designed within a safe environment, with enhanced health and safety measures in place.

And after feasting on all that art, why not stay for lunch or a summer cocktail at the elegant Diwan restaurant, which is expanding its patio seating to inside dining, in accordance with public health guidelines, or treat yourself at the Shop with irresistible gifts inspired by the Museum's Collection.

The Museum, including all galleries, the Shop, and Diwan restaurant, welcomes visitors back, starting Sunday, July 25. Visiting hours are 10 am to 5:30 pm, Thursdays to Sundays, through to and inclusive of Labour Day. It's advised to book your visit in advance, but tickets may also be purchased on site pending capacity. Pay What You Can tickets are available from July 16 to August 2.

For advance tickets: ticketing.agakhanmuseum.org/events.

To make a reservation at Diwan restaurant: [OpenTable](https://www.opentable.com/aga-khan-museum).

Please note, there will be limited capacity in the Museum and limited seating in the restaurant. For more information about hours, health protocols and tours:
agakhanmuseum.org/news/reopening-faqs

On top of the reopening, the Museum enters another exciting chapter in its seven-year history — with a new leader at the helm.

Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis, the Museum’s recently appointed Director and CEO, says she is thrilled to assume the role just in time to welcome visitors back to the Museum in a safe and social-distance-friendly space.

“The Museum’s mandate to showcase the contributions of Muslim cultures and to foster pluralism through the arts is more urgent today than ever,” says Dr. Al-Khamis, who has been a key member of the Aga Khan Museum’s executive and leadership team over the past four years, acting as Director of Collections and Public Programs since 2017.

“I can’t wait for us to reopen the Museum and engage our audiences with our vibrant onsite offerings of exhibitions, feature displays, activities and pop-up performances. Meanwhile, our exciting digital programming and outreach through our #MuseumWithoutWalls will continue, too, as we aim to carry our mission worldwide, especially with educational initiatives and resources for students and teachers.”

All the Museum’s current exhibitions and experiences are designed to reflect themes of resilience, hope, renewal, and human connection across cultures and differences. They include:

- [State of Play](#), (until Oct. 24, 2021) our brand-new exhibition, examines games and play from many angles, and features a video installation and a show-stopping hanging sculpture in the Atrium. The four-channel video installation shows a ball, stick, rope, and hoop. The hanging installation is a playful construction comprised of a panoply of plaything shapes. Both are as thought-provoking as they are fun and frivolous. Viewers will discover the transformative nature of games and be reminded that play and playfulness are often rich starting points for creativity.
- [Remastered](#) (until Sept. 6, 2021) opens new windows on the Museum’s world-class collection of Iranian, Turkish, and Mughal Indian manuscript paintings. Anchoring the exhibition is a selection of 11 resplendent masterworks that rarely go on display, let alone together. Digital interactives, developed in collaboration with Ryerson University Library, allow visitors to explore 40 additional pieces from the Collection and get immersed in heroic stories from the manuscripts.
- The [Bloom](#) rotation (until Oct. 18, 2021) showcases flora-inspired objects in the Museum’s Collection. Planted throughout the main-floor gallery are pieces adorned

with flowers, trees, vines, and other greenery. As they meander through the gallery, viewers will encounter nature-inspired designs on paintings, delicate ceramics, and fine metalwork. Other objects, including scientific manuscripts and works of Iranian poetry, reflect the countless ways plants have been used to understand, enhance, and express the human experience.

- [*Faig Ahmed: Dissolving Order*](#) (until Sept. 6, 2021) features the work of the acclaimed Azerbaijan-based artist, who takes a Salvador Dali-like approach to his country's traditional hand-woven carpets.
- Also on display (until Aug. 29, 2021) in the main-floor gallery, is the Museum's latest contemporary art acquisition, [*Kumbi Saleh 3020 CE*](#), by Ghanaian-Canadian artist Ekow Nimako. Constructed of approximately 100,000 black LEGO® pieces, the 30-square-foot sculpture is an Afrofuturistic reimagining of the capital of the medieval Kingdom of Ghana. The work was the centerpiece of Nimako's Museum-commissioned series [*Building Black: Civilizations*](#). The 2019 show was a creative response to the Museum exhibition [*Caravans of Gold, Fragments in Time*](#) (originally organized by the Block Museum in Evanston, Illinois), which spotlighted West Africa's sprawling trade in gold and other commodities in the medieval era and its role in the spread of Islam.
- In partnership with the city-wide CONTACT Scotiabank Photography Festival, the Aga Khan Museum's [*Land/s*](#) is an outdoor exhibition of photos by U.S.-based Iranian photographer Gohar Dashti. Installed on the grounds of the Aga Khan Park will be groups of large-sized photos that depict the story of immigration, movement, and longing.

Each grouping will showcase two photos – one taken in Iran, the other in the U.S. – of landscapes so similar in colour pallet and topography it shows that there is, indeed, a place like home.

Even after the Museum welcomes visitors back through its physical doors, it will continue to engage local and international audiences through its virtual #MuseumWithoutWalls. Launched in March 2020 in response to the first wave of COVID-19 lockdowns, the [#MuseumWithoutWalls](#) has evolved into an online destination, showcasing art from the Collection, exclusive performances by local and global artists, thought-provoking talks, enriching activities for children and families, and more. In total, #MuseumWithoutWalls content has reached approximately five million people a year.

Dr. Al-Khamis says the pandemic has prompted many new ideas on how to make the Museum even more relevant and responsive to the interests and needs of local and global communities when it reopens.

“I look forward to reimagining the Museum with a renewed focus on our audiences, their needs and expectations,” she says. “As we are finally embarking on our journey back to ‘normalcy,’ the arts will have a crucial role to play in contributing to healing, well-being, and – most importantly – our reflections around how to build a better world post-Covid.”

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 while often reflecting, through its permanent and temporary exhibitions, how cultures connect with one another. Designed by architect Fumihiko Maki, the Museum shares a 6.8-hectare site with Toronto’s Ismaili Centre, which was designed by architect Charles Correa. The surrounding landscaped park was designed by landscape architect Vladimir Djurovic.

– 30 –

FOR PRESS INQUIRIES PLEASE CONTACT:

Olena Gisys, Porter Novelli
olena.gisys@porternovelli.com
416.839.8227

Kelly Frances, Marketing and
Communications Director, Aga Khan
Museum
press@agakhanmuseum.org
416.858.8735