





AGA KHAN MUSEUM

Mission

Through the arts, the
Aga Khan Museum sparks wonder,
curiosity, and understanding of
Muslim cultures and their connection
with other cultures.

Vision

To impact lives and contribute to more inclusive and peaceful societies.

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OPENING REFLECTIONS

Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis, Director & CEO



2023 was a year of exciting new horizons, filled with joy, renewed energy, and dynamic focus on the future as we welcomed all of you back to the Museum for a host of impactful initiatives.

Literally and metaphorically at the heart of our colourful year, our *Rumi* exhibition not only inspired tens of thousands, but also became our secondmost popular exhibition ever — so popular, in fact, that we are currently working on developing a touring version.

Our Museum festivals once again saw our communities come together, with *Rhythms of Canada* attracting 12,000 visitors and Nuit Blanche bringing 5,000 people to the Museum and the Aga Khan Park. Meanwhile, our ninth *Duende Flamenco Festival* in November completely sold out, attracting an audience of nearly 1,400. We succeeded in engaging over 600 students, across Toronto's two largest school boards, through educational outreach programs focused on the intercultural theme of flamenco and some of its spectacular artists.

Throughout the year, our Education team engaged with thousands of students on-site, off-site, and online, with programming during Islamic Heritage

Month in October alone attracting nearly 9,000 participants — a 260 percent increase over 2022!

Looking ahead, our plans are more ambitious than ever. Our goal will be to position the Aga Khan Museum — locally and globally — as the go-to museum and educational resource for intercultural learning around the arts of Muslim cultures, with the aim to foster dialogue, empathy, and understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims and affect positive social change. In terms of our Public Programs, we aspire to become a fully accessible, inclusive, and innovative creative platform and incubator. We will become a broadcasting voice at the heart of the community, empowering thought-provoking, transformative intercultural connections and experiences through exhibitions, public programming, performances, and festivals.

Our global footprint, meanwhile, will grow through our digital **#MuseumWithoutWalls** and our accessible subscription model that will harness digital technology to provide high-quality education and enjoyment online by sharing the best of our Collections, art exhibitions, programs, and performances with individuals and communities globally.

The Museum looks to the future with renewed determination and positivity. There is much to do and contribute to this complex world, and with our vision, mandate, awesome Museum team, and **you**, we will make it happen!

U. M. Klam's

OPENING REFLECTIONS

Nadia Humayun, Director, Development



As I reflect on 2023, I am filled with immense gratitude for the Museum's incredible donor community. Philanthropic support touches every single part of the Museum.

From dynamic performances in the Nanji Family Foundation Auditorium, to impactful digital and educational programming that allows students to explore their identities through the arts, to thought-provoking exhibitions that share stories asking us to look at the world in new ways, philanthropy underpins our impact. This support is vital in helping the Museum contribute to more inclusive and peaceful societies through the arts of the Muslim world.

With great thanks to the generosity of our donors, 2023 was the Museum's most successful fundraising year to date. A special thank you to everyone who supported the **2023 Lapis Ball: In Ecstatic Motion**, which raised over \$1 million in support of the Museum.

As the Museum looks ahead to its milestone tenth anniversary year, starting in September 2024, I want to acknowledge the many thousands of people who have contributed to the success of the last decade.

With so much to look forward to on the horizon, we can't wait to continue partnering with our donors and supporters to advance the mission and vision of the Museum in new and impactful ways. Thank you for your passion for the Museum and for being part of our journey as we celebrate ten years and look at all that is to come in the years ahead.

Nadia H.



From Left to Right: Azim Nanji, Pyarali G. Nanji, Prince Amyn Aga Khan, Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis, Gulshan Nanji, Tazmin Nanji-Amlani, Ameerally Kassim-Lakha, Moyez Jadavji,

TRANSFORMATIONAL GIVING

In 2023, the Museum was honoured to receive a transformational multimillion-dollar donation from the Gulshan & Pyarali Gulamali Nanji Family Foundation that will expand the Museum's reach and impact millions of people around the globe, deepening their understanding of Muslim cultures and their connection with the world. The generous donation is the largest granted by the Nanji Family Foundation to an arts organization.

"Our support for the Aga Khan Museum stems from our passion and appreciation for the arts and the ways in which they unify us. The Museum has established its place within the shared fabric of Canadian society, encouraging mutual understanding and appreciation of one another. We hope this contribution will encourage others to support their community, country, and the world."

– Azim Nanji on behalf of the Gulshan & Pyarali G. Nanji Family Foundation

In recognition of their long-standing generosity and support, the Museum's Auditorium has been renamed the Nanji Family Foundation Auditorium.



BY THE NUMBERS

8 MILLION

reached online

Performing Arts events featuring 360 artists



192,805

Museum visitors

BMO Free Wednesdays attracted nearly 19,000 visitors



423 TD Pop-Up Performances featuring 116 artists

35,000 downloads of This Being Human

260%

increase in attendance at Islamic Heritage Month activities from 2022

OVER 80

community, national, and international partners



12,529

took a virtual exhibition tour



16,700

children participated in school programming



\$11.7 MILLION

raised



volunteers gave over 24,000 hours of their time





LIVE AT THE AGA KHAN MUSEUM

EXHIBITION AND INSTALLATION HIGHLIGHTS

In 2023, audiences experienced powerful storytelling through original exhibitions, special installations, and themed installations in the Museum and the Aga Khan Park, complemented by digital access available globally through immersive 3D exhibition tours.

The Museum Collections Gallery featured two special themed installations — *Water* and *Inside/Outside* — highlighting objects around these themes designed to help visitors look at the stories contained in the Museum's Collections in new ways.



MAY 13-OCTOBER 1

RUMI

Curator: Dr. Michael Chagnon

Visitors were invited to journey through the life and timeless legacy of Jalal al-Din Muhammad Balkhi (d. 1273), known as Rumi, on the 750th anniversary of his passing. The exhibition explored his early life in Central Asia, his experiences with displacement and migration, and his transformation into one of the most important mystical poets of the Persian-Islamic tradition.

As part of the exhibition, three new major installation works by leading contemporary artists were commissioned: *Distance Between Homes*, by Hangama Amiri; *The Dream That Must Be Interpreted*, by Erdem Taşdelen; and *The Elephant in the Dark*, by Simin Keramati.

LEARN MORE

Experience Rumi from the comfort of your home in 3D!

Publication: A Visual Journey Through the Life and Legacy of a Sufi Mystic, by Dr. Michael Chagnon

Financially assisted by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund

Presented by Sunray Group

Supported by Texas Jasmine, Lizna and Farhan Kabani, and the Global Patrons of the Aga Khan Museum



MAY 13-OCTOBER 9

LISTEN.

Special Projects Curator: Marianne Fenton

Visitors were invited to untangle meaning in a new immersive meditative art installation by Matt Donovan and Hallie Siegel emerging from the centre reflecting pool in the Aga Khan Park.

Inspired by a 13th-century poem attributed to Rumi, *Listen.* picked up where he left off, inviting visitors to open their senses and experience the unknown that lies just beyond their awareness.

"Most galleries and museums strive to be inclusive these days, but intercultural dialogue has been part of the Aga Khan Museum's core mandate since its inception. Juxtaposed against its historical collection, the Museum's thoughtfully appointed exhibition spaces combine with an international audience reach to make the Museum one of Toronto's most exhilarating places for contemporary artists to exhibit. If Toronto wants to be known as a world-class city for the arts, it can rest assured that's already happening."

- Matt Donovan and Hallie Siegel

LEARN MORE

Listen. was presented through the generous support of the Faris D. Virani Fund for the Living Arts.



NOVEMBER 10, 2023-MAY 5, 2024

SHEZAD DAWOOD: Night in the Garden of Love

Special Projects Curator: Marianne Fenton

Night in the Garden of Love was created by British artist Shezad Dawood, inspired by African-American Muslim musician, composer, and polymath (Allāmah) Dr. Yusef Lateef (1920-2013). In this multilayered exhibition, the garden serves as the starting point for a creative futuristic and intercultural conversation in which art and music can help transform the individual and the environment.

LEARN MORE

Experience Night in the Garden of Love from the comfort of your home in 3D!

The Aga Khan Museum acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.

Supported by the Global Patrons of the Aga Khan Museum **MAY 2-NOVEMBER 5**

CULTURED PALLETS

Curator: Bita Pourvash

Presented in the Museum Collections Gallery, *Cultured Pallets: Aga Khan Museum*, by Canadian-Iranian artist Soheila Esfahani, is comprised of more than 100 shipping pallets. Esfahani transforms these everyday objects, often used as platforms to transport goods and materials, to capture the feeling of in-betweenness — a space where those experiencing migration often find themselves negotiating identities and cultures.

LEARN MORE





APRIL 29-SEPTEMBER 4

MAÏMOUNA GUERRESI: Sebaätou Rijal & Villes Nouvelles and Ancient Shadows

Inspired by the complex history of Marrakesh and the Seven Saints of Marrakesh, this portrait series, which was on display in the Lower–Level Gallery and the Aga Khan Park, explored how spiritual growth can bring about changes in perspective. The series addresses the breaking down of barriers caused by extreme individualism in today's world and insights into the French colonial architectural style with the traditions, culture, and spirituality of Marrakesh.

LEARN MORE

Presented in partnership with CONTACT Photography Festival



SEPTEMBER 23, 2023-MARCH 31, 2024

TECHNICOLOUR OCEAN: The Fragile Biodiversity of Indonesia

Through the art of wildlife photography, Prince Hussain Aga Khan has dedicated his life to raising awareness of underwater worlds that are breathtaking in their kaleidoscopic colours and diversity. For this exhibition, which was on display in the Lower-Level Gallery and the Aga Khan Park, Prince Hussain collected photographs taken between 2011 and 2023 in Indonesian waters — some of the most biodiverse underwater places on the planet.

LEARN MORE

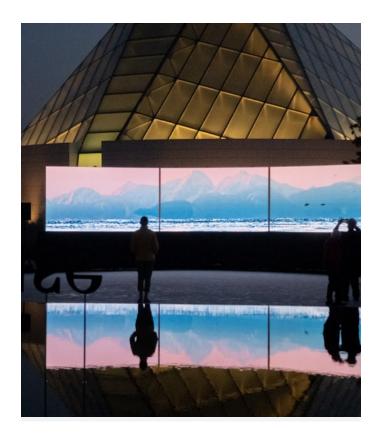
SEPTEMBER 23-OCTOBER 1

GO FISH

GO FISH, directed and produced by Scott Smith and Nettie Wild and presented in the Aga Khan Park, took viewers on a visual journey inside the annual herring migration, enveloping visitors in the natural wonder of this annual spectacle.

We respectfully acknowledge that *GO FISH* was filmed on the Unceded Territory of the K'ómoks First Nation, the traditional keepers of this land and sea.

LEARN MORE





NOVEMBER 28, 2023-APRIL 21, 2024

KEVORK MOURAD: SEEING THROUGH BABEL

Seeing Through Babel explores the profound influence of language diversity in shaping our shared humanity, inviting us to reflect on the beauty of our differences and their contribution to our collective tapestry. Mourad's installation encouraged everyone to find a piece of themselves within this celebration of differences.

LEARN MORE

The Museum wishes to thank Zahoor and Taslim Samji for their support in the acquisition of *Kevork Mourad: Seeing Through Babel*.



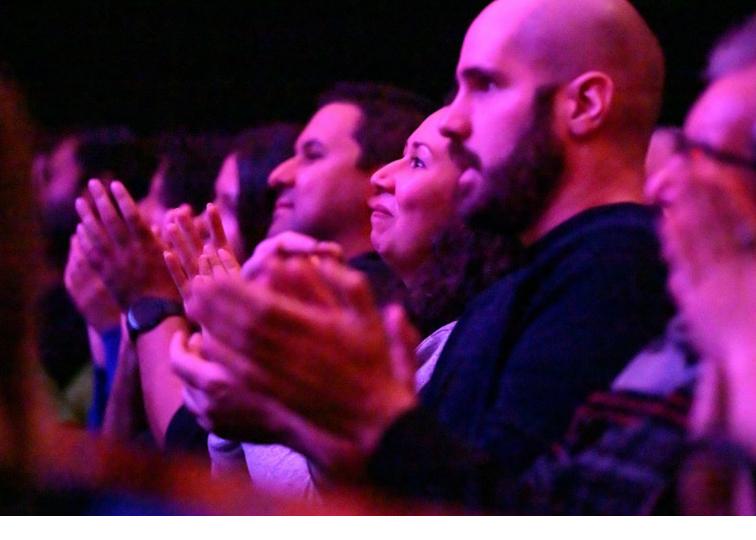


PERFORMANCES TO LIFT YOUR SPIRIT

The Aga Khan Museum champions the power of the arts in facilitating cross-cultural understanding and dialogue through the practice of cultural pluralism. In 2023, artists inspired audiences through impactful performances in the Nanji Family Foundation Auditorium and beyond. Highlighted below are just some of the performances presented in 2023.

The Museum's Performing Arts programming is generously supported by the Nanji Family Foundation.

With support from the Department of Canadian Heritage through the Canadian Arts Presentation Fund.



SEPTEMBER 17

CARMINE: SOMETHING IS AWAKE

Now in its third year, the Intercultural and Creative Music Fellowship is a project aimed at fostering a greater understanding of Muslim heritage in music and film while also helping emerging artists achieve greater professional experience. In the summer of 2023, nine Humber College students worked together to create and record five songs, two films, a zine (self-published booklet), and a series of digital art as part of an album, titled **Something is Awake**.

LEARN MORE

"Cross-disciplinary work and initiatives help students seeking to be professionals in their field connect and adapt to sectors in the real world where their work is of great value. These types of initiatives also inform the community of cultural gaps that exist in accessibility, diversity, and representation. I feel I gained a great deal of understanding of how to approach creative problems by considering and applying a diversity of perspectives."

- Intercultural and Creative Music Fellowship student

Presented with support from Bashir and Farida Dhanani and Family.

SEPTEMBER 30

<<1.6° | PAWĀKAN | DREAM SPIRIT

The Aga Khan Museum marked National Day for Truth and Reconciliation by holding an inclusive and safe space for all. In an eternal unfolding of sākihitowin (love) and wāhkōhtowin (sacred kinship), pawākan is a song, a prayer, an embodiment of spirit in a resurgent celebration of nêhiyawêwin (Plains Cree language) and resonant voice.

LEARN MORE

MAY 13

RUMI NATIONS

The Museum celebrated the opening of the exhibition, *Rumi*, with an immersive showcase that combined the potent power of poetry, music, and movement.

LEARN MORE

NOVEMBER 10

NIGHT IN THE GARDEN PERFORMANCE

This world premiere saw longtime collaborators of one of the most prolific musicians of the 20th century, Yusef Lateef, as they interpreted a special banner painted by **Night in the Garden of Love** artist Shezad Dawood.

LEARN MORE



TD POP-UP PERFORMANCES

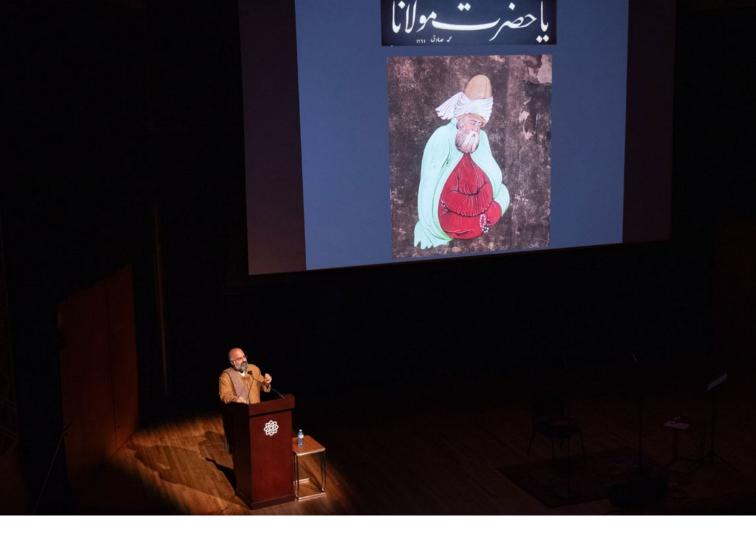
This dynamic program of weekly informal performances provides a platform for newcomer and emerging artists to showcase their craft, initiate cross-cultural dialogue, and engage new audiences. Performances happen throughout the year in the Museum's public spaces and galleries. Special performances at signature events like the Museum's *Rhythms of Canada* festival are also presented.

116 TD Pop-Up Performers, featured in 423 performances.

"As an emerging artist, being part of the Aga Khan Museum's Pop-Up Performances has personally shown me how dynamic and alive art can be. These moments of creativity add a layer of personal connection between artists like me and visitors, enriching the Museum's culture in a truly unique way."

- Shanaya Patel

Pop-up Performances at the Museum are sponsored by TD Bank Group through TD Ready Commitment.



DYNAMIC DISCUSSIONS

In 2023, the Museum invited artists, academics, scientists, and museum experts to participate in intercultural dialogue and programming that celebrate the contributions of Muslim civilizations to art, intellect, scholarship, innovation, and culture.

FEBRUARY 11

Global Conversations: Women and Girls in Science

This inspiring conversation celebrated the International Day of Women and Girls in Science at the Aga Khan Museum with a thought-provoking panel of

Muslim women scientists, presented in partnership with Massey College and the Canadian Commission for UNESCO.

LEARN MORE

MARCH 19

Artist Talk: Shaheer Zazai

Contemporary artist Shaheer Zazai and Special Projects Curator Marianne Fenton discussed the inspiration behind Zazai's work in **Afghanistan My Love**, and how his Afghan-Canadian identity has contributed to his worldview.

LEARN MORE

APRIL 23

What Makes the Great Mongol Shahnama Great?

This year's Islamic Art & Material Culture Collaborative Annual Distinguished Lecture featured Professor Robert Hillenbrand's (University of Edinburgh) vivid exploration of one of the most renowned illustrated copies of Firdawsi's epic **Book of Kings** ever produced.

LEARN MORE



MAY 17

Local or Global? The Future of Diaspora and Immigration Museums

Marking International Museum Day, this panel discussion explored how museums engage diaspora and immigrant communities and represent their stories, speaking to local and global issues and networks.

LEARN MORE

MAY-JUNE

Massey College X Aga Khan Museum: The Global Legacy of Rumi

Presented in partnership with Massey College, this series of three panel discussions delved deeper into the major and timeless themes explored in and arising from the *Rumi* exhibition, offering an insightful examination of the life and impact of one of history's most storied poets.

LEARN MORE



FESTIVALS

Festivals open the Museum and the Aga Khan Park to thousands of diverse visitors of all ages. In addition to the festivals the Museum produced in 2023, we were proud to participate in citywide festivals such as Doors Open (9,759 visitors) and Nuit Blanche (4,844 visitors).



FEBRUARY 18-20

Family Day Weekend in Partnership with the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto

A celebration of Lunar New Year at the Aga Khan Museum with exciting activities and performances attracted over 3,600 visitors.

LEARN MORE







JUNE 30 - JULY 3

RHYTHMS OF CANADA

More than 12,000 people visited the Museum and the Aga Khan Park over this four-day festival to enjoy musical performances by local and international artists, activities for all ages, delicious food, and free access to the Museum Collections Gallery and *Rumi* exhibition.

"I am very thankful to the Aga Khan Museum. They invited us from Saskatoon to come here and perform our songs in our own language."

"We still remember all the girls and women who are living back home in Afghanistan. We sing because we want to present their voice because they can't."

- Sounds of Afghanistan

LEARN MORE

Gold Sponsor Sun Life

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Supported in part by the Government of Canada

Funded by the Government of Ontario

Financially assisted by the Ontario Cultural Attractions Fund





NOVEMBER 16 - 19

DUENDE FLAMENCO FESTIVAL

This year's festival explored the multidisciplinary nature of flamenco and its continually evolving modes of expression through an exciting celebration of dance, music, film, and family activities. Almost 600 students were able to meet and learn from the performers featured in the Festival.

LEARN MORE

Supported in part by the Government of Canada

DECEMBER 27-29

LIGHT UP THE DARK 2023

Light Up the Dark returned to the Museum with animations created by a group of OCAD University students and graduates. The works were inspired by masterpieces in the Museum's Collections and by British artist Shezad Dawood's artworks featured in Night in the Garden of Love.

LEARN MORE

The Aga Khan Museum acknowledges the support of the Canada Council for the Arts







LIFELONG LEARNING AT THE AGA KHAN MUSEUM

Innovative and impactful education programs allow young people to explore diverse cultures as well as their own. Students are empowered to learn about themselves and one another, sharing in the common threads that tie them together and celebrating their differences.

The Museum maintains partnerships across Ontario and works with local service organizations to provide complimentary educational programs and community outreach initiatives to marginalized communities. Partners include local school

boards and charities such as the Toronto District School Board, Peel District School Board, and Ronald McDonald House. Through these partnerships, the Museum engages learners with on-site, off-site, and virtual programming. In 2023, 16,700 students attended in-person or virtual educational programs hosted by the Museum.

In October, the Museum partnered with the Toronto District School Board Islamic Heritage Month, providing over 7,000 students with on-site and virtual programs and workshops that highlighted and celebrated the rich contributions of Muslim civilizations to world heritage.

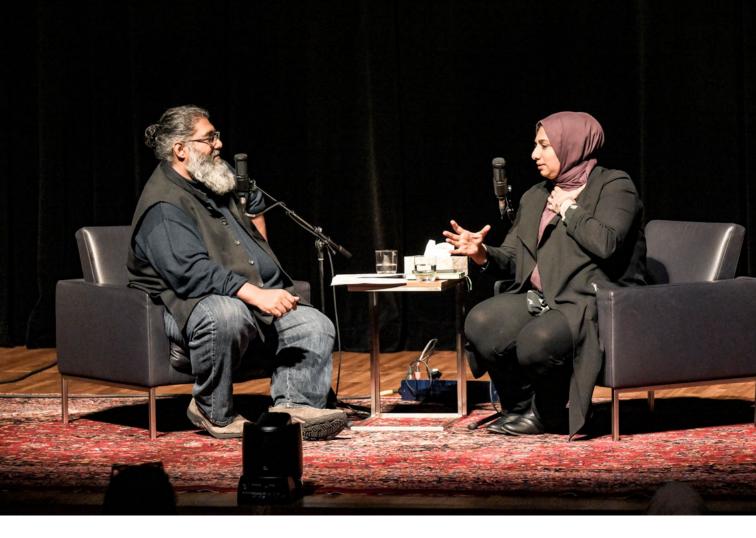
The 2023 Aga Khan Museum Summer Camp welcomed 123 campers from around the world — from the United States to Australia and South Africa as well as many newcomers to Canada.

"We would like to express our deepest gratitude to you for being a workshop presenter at the Muslim Youth Leadership Conference. It was Peel's first conference for Muslim students, and it wouldn't have been a success without you! Students loved the hands-on nature of both workshops and enjoyed incorporating their creativity and ideas to their work. Students had great things to say about the workshops and how the presenters made them feel welcome and seen. An environment of inclusivity is possible when genuine care and understanding are evident. We thank you for providing that atmosphere for our students!"

- Muslim Youth Leadership Conference Team

The Museum is thankful for the support of a number of donors who invest in Education as a priority, including the Weston Family Foundation, Wynford Holding, Nazmin and Mohamed Rawji, and Rosemin and Liaguat Chatur.





CONNECTED

PODCAST

This Being Human

2023 marked the third season of the Museum's beloved podcast hosted by Abdul-Rehman Malik, reaching 135,000 people across 136 countries since the podcast's inception.

Season 3 highlights included award-winning journalist and producer Noor Tagouri, world-renowned musician Zakir Hussain, and a special live-audience recording of the podcast with

Abdul-Rehman's sister, Ausma Malik, the first woman in a hijab to be elected to public office in Canada, and the first Muslim-identifying, hijab-wearing woman on Toronto City Council.

LEARN MORE

The Museum wishes to thank Nadir and Shabin Mohamed for their founding support of *This Being Human* and The Hilary and Galen Weston Foundation for their generous support of *This Being Human*, Season 3. *This Being Human* is proudly presented in partnership with TVO.



IAM

(digital-only exhibition)

In 2021, during the pandemic shutdown, the Museum collaborated with Torontobased visual artist and scientist Radha Chaddah to present her work, *IAM*, on the #MuseumWithoutWalls platform. Act 2 was released on #MuseumWithoutWalls in 2022 as the Museum's first entirely digital exhibition. Acts 3 and 4 debuted as a mesmerizing multidisciplinary performance in 2023.

LEARN MORE

Presented by the Aga Khan Museum and Under 5 Studio, with support from the Canada Council for the Arts, the Toronto Arts Council, the Government of Ontario, and Merely Players.

TARANA DIGITAL PROJECT

Co-produced with Pratibha Arts, the Tarana Digital Project is a series of videos showcasing works by Bageshree Vaze that celebrate the spectrum of Kathak music and dance — from the rhythmic language to the facial expressions and lyrical movements. It is focused on engaging audiences with South Asian dance while equipping viewers with educational tools to further the awareness and appreciation of the Kathak tradition — one of the original forms of Indian classical dance influenced by the Mughal period.

LEARN MORE



LAPIS BALL: IN ECSTATIC MOTION



On Thursday, September 28, 2023, over 250 guests gathered at the Aga Khan Museum for Lapis Ball: In Ecstatic Motion.

A celebration of the enduring themes of Rumi's poetry, the evening was brought to life through the visual arts, storytelling, and performances by Moe Clark, Saeed Kamjoo, and the Mekaal Hasan Band.

Through the generous support of our sponsors and donors, the Museum raised over \$1 million.

These funds contribute to innovative exhibitions, educational programming for children and lifelong learners, as well as family-friendly activities.

The Museum wishes to thank the Lapis Ball Committee for their support in making the event a success.

Presenting Sponsors

Anwar & Nasreen Aman Steel Canada Resources Limited

Supporting Sponsors

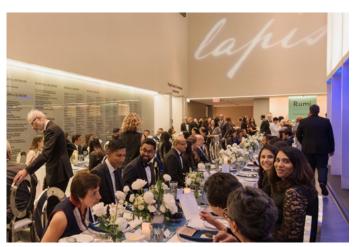
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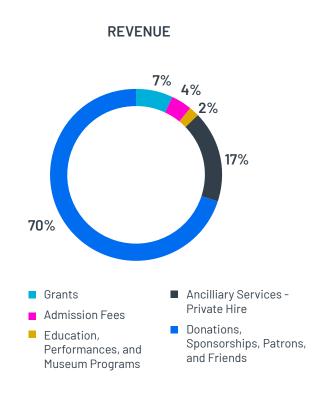






OPERATIONS

The Aga Khan Museum had another successful fundraising year raising close to \$12 million in sponsorships and individual donations. To build the Museum's future sustainability additional funds were secured towards the Museum's Endowment Fund. Direct revenue generated through admission fees, education, and performing arts programming also saw a significant increase with audiences returning to pre-pandemic levels.





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^{*}List current as of December 31, 2023

The Aga Khan Museum is grateful for the support of our donors, sponsors, government, and foundation partners who made a contribution in 2023. Your dedication and impactful philanthropy play a vital role in the long-term success of the Museum. Thank you for your passion for our mission to spark wonder and curiosity through the arts of Muslim civilizations and connect communities through intercultural understanding.

MAJOR GIFT DONORS

Dr. Almas and Nizar Adatia

Nimet and Riaz Ahmed and Family

Family of Late Kabiruddin and Moaez Alibhai Shariff

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In Memory of Huzur Mukhi Miyanji Janmohamed Sunesra , Mehdi and Zarina Mohammed, Jahanzaib and Anam, Neelam and Michael

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In Memory of our Beloved Mother and Wife Shams M. Ramji – Rustam, Aleem, Imran and Jehan

Mohamedali, Sakar, Shahiroz, Shellina and Ferenaz Ratanshi

Naaz and Mohamed Rawji In Memory of our Parents

In Memory of Shahbegum Remu-Datoo and Nurdin Bana GH Malwani

Amirali, Parveen, Arman, Muneera and Sanayah Rupani, Rahim and Reena Lalani and Family

Sadrudin and Nurkhatun Sajan – Ava, Aalia, Aly, Layla and Nyla

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Shiraz, Yasmin, Alim, Sabrina and Areez Shariff and Family

Sadrudin and Yasmin Sidi

The Family of Late Mansur and Rozina Tejpar

Nurdin and Shirin Tejpar and Farah, Rizwan, Alia, Lilah and Ayla

Parviz, Courtney, Qassim, Eames, Nala and Zavhar Tejpar Family

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