

## Aga Khan Museum launches #MuseumWithoutWalls digital portal

*North America's only Islamic art museum connects audiences from around the world to experience beauty and humanity in the midst of the COVID-19 global pandemic*

**Toronto — Wednesday, April 1, 2020** — The Aga Khan Museum warmly welcomes audiences around the world to enter its virtual doors and explore a rich offering of online experiences designed to help people of all ages connect with arts and culture.

With the Aga Khan Museum temporarily closed due to the COVID-19 situation, its curators, educators, and cultural programmers are collaborating on #MuseumWithoutWalls, which showcases the best of what the institution has to offer — on the Internet. Visitors to #MuseumWithoutWalls can view captivating art and artifacts from the Museum's Collection, engage directly with artists and curators via live webinars and gallery tours, download hands-on learning activities for children, and more. New content will be posted regularly to the Museum's [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#) channels and to the [#MuseumWithoutWalls web portal](#).

"The Aga Khan Museum is so much more than a bricks-and-mortar institution," Henry Kim, the Museum's Director and CEO, said. "We are a hub for learning, creating community, and opening doors to a wider world. As a museum with a global mandate, we can, and must, continue to connect people and cultures in new and exciting ways."

Rolling out over the next days and weeks will be new experiences specially prepared for the #MuseumWithoutWalls. Many will tie into exhibitions and events scheduled to take place at the Museum in the spring and summer. For example, Museum Curator Dr. Michael Chagnon will lead viewers through a virtual preview of the upcoming *Sanctuary* exhibition, a collection of 36 woven carpets designed by leading contemporary artists. A [new Spotify playlist programmed by the Museum's Performing Arts team](#) taps into themes and emotions explored in the show.

"Exhibitions like *Sanctuary*, *Don't Ask Me Where I'm From*, and the portrait series *Chrysalis* highlight the creativity and perseverance of people who find themselves at the forefront of the defining challenges and changes of the 21<sup>st</sup> century," said Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis, the Museum's Director of Curatorial and Public Programs. "Their stories are timely reminders of humanity's near-limitless potential to adapt, create, and make meaning in the face of adversity."

The #MuseumWithoutWalls will also play host to twice-weekly Pocket Performances, presented by TD Bank Group, featuring diverse sights and sounds from local artists as well as performers from around the world. The [April 1 Pocket Performance](#) boasts the classical Indian stylings of Toronto-based dancer and choreographer Paromita Kar. On April 4, the Museum will publish [a new homemade performance video by Syria-born clarinetist Majd Sekkar](#), who came to Canada in 2016 as a refugee. Additional Pocket Performances will be made available on the following dates, with more to be confirmed:

- Wednesday, April 8: To be announced

- Saturday, April 11: Pipa virtuoso Wen Zhao
- Wednesday, April 15: Egyptian-Canadian singer-songwriter Maryem Tollar

A central aim of the #MuseumWithoutWalls, Al-Khamis said, is to create an interactive virtual space where viewers can ask questions of artists and curators and share their own responses to the experiences and ideas on display. “We excel at providing spaces where we can experience beauty together and share new discoveries with each other,” she said. “We proudly invite the world to join us in exploring great art and thoughtful conversation, and to embrace art’s power to inspire hope.”

For people looking to dive in right away, [the Museum's online collection](#) is a great place to start. It contains high-quality images of hundreds of objects from the Museum’s archives. You can also take [a 3-D virtual tour of the Museum's Bellerive Room](#), which is home to 60 pieces from the ceramics collection of the late Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan and Princess Catherine Aga Khan. The selection showcases works dating from the early Islamic periods to the 17<sup>th</sup> century and highlights the delicate craftsmanship of Muslim potters from China to Europe. Additional 3-D tours of the Museum’s exhibitions and spaces will be made available on the following dates:

Museum Atrium: Monday, April 6, 2020

Exhibition – *Our Sustainable Future: Student Photography*: Monday, April 6, 2020

Exhibition – *Caravans of Gold: Fragments in Time*: Monday, April 13, 2020

Exhibition – *The Moon: A Voyage Through Time*: Monday, April 27, 2020

Exhibition – *The World of the Fatimids*: Monday, May 25, 2020

Exhibition – *Emperors & Jewels: Treasures of the Indian Courts*, from the Al-Sabah Collection, Kuwait: Monday, June 8, 2020

In line with Ontario public health directives, the Aga Khan Museum has temporarily closed. The reopening date will be determined based upon guidance from health officials.

**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 both 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.

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