



AGA KHAN MUSEUM

Aga Khan Museum to Open on September 18th

Museum to showcase the cultural and scientific contributions of Muslim civilizations to world heritage

Toronto, August 18, 2014 - The Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, which is dedicated to presenting an overview of the artistic, intellectual and scientific contributions that Muslim civilizations have made to world heritage, will open its doors to the public on the 18th of September.

The Museum's Permanent Collection of over 1,000 objects includes masterpieces that reflect a broad range of artistic styles and materials. These portraits, textiles, miniatures, manuscripts, ceramics, tiles, medical texts, books and musical instruments represent more than ten centuries of human history and a geographic area stretching from the Iberian Peninsula to China.

Designed by architect Fumihiko Maki, the Museum shares a 6.8-hectare (17-acre) site with Toronto's Ismaili Centre, which was designed by architect Charles Correa. The surrounding landscaped park, designed by landscape architect Vladimir Djurovic, will provide an exciting new green space for the city of Toronto.

"One of the lessons we have learned in recent years is that the world of Islam and the Western world need to work together much more effectively at building mutual understanding – especially as these cultures interact and intermingle more actively," commented His Highness the Aga Khan. "We hope that this museum will contribute to a better understanding of the peoples of Islam in all of their religious, ethnic, linguistic and social diversity."

From their earliest origins, Muslim civilizations have been characterized by a remarkable diversity of geographies, languages, and cultures. Toronto – and Canada more generally – is internationally recognized for embracing such diversity. The city therefore provides an ideal home for an institution that strives to promote mutual understanding, respect and tolerance among the world's cultures.

"The Aga Khan Museum has an international outlook," observes Henry Kim, Director of the Museum. "Home to a collection of astonishingly beautiful works of art, it will showcase the artistic creativity and achievements of Muslim civilizations from Spain to China. I think local and international visitors will be greatly surprised when they discover just how much the arts of Muslim civilizations are a part of our shared global cultural heritage."

Since 2007, over 1 million people have experienced the splendour of the Aga Khan Museum Collection. The Musée du Louvre in Paris, the State Hermitage Museum in St. Petersburg, the Gulbenkian Museum in Lisbon, the Martin-Gropius-Bau in Berlin, the Sakıp Sabancı Museum in Istanbul, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur and the Asian Civilisations Museum in Singapore have all hosted temporary exhibitions of major works of art from the Aga Khan Museum Collection.

For more information about the Aga Khan Museum, its upcoming exhibitions and programming, please visit www.agakhanmuseum.org



For press inquiries please contact:

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Notes to Editors:

The Aga Khan Museum 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 Aga Khan Trust for Culture (AKTC) focuses on the physical, social, cultural and economic revitalization of communities in the developing world, but some of its programs, including the Museum, span both the developed and developing worlds. AKTC is composed of several individual programs and units: the Aga Khan Historic Cities Programme (<http://www.akdn.org/hcp/>), which promotes the conservation and re-use of buildings and public spaces in ways that spur socio-economic development; the Aga Khan Award for Architecture (<http://www.akdn.org/architecture/>), which awards a prize for architecture every three years; the Aga Khan Music Initiative (http://www.akdn.org/aktc_music_about.asp), which supports talented musicians and music educators who strive to preserve, transmit, and further develop their musical heritage in contemporary forms; the online architectural resource ArchNet.org (www.archnet.org) and the Aga Khan Program for Islamic Architecture at Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (<http://web.mit.edu/akpia/www/>).

The Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN), a private, international, non-denominational development organization, is active in 30 countries and employs over 80,000 people globally. Its ten agencies address complex development issues, including the provision of quality healthcare and education services, cultural and economic revitalization, micro-enterprise, entrepreneurship and economic development, the advancement of civil society and the protection of the environment.