2025 ANNUAL REPORT

AGA KHAN MUSEUM

"Performing at the Aga Khan Museum was a wonderful experience. I had never been there before and what I found stunned me — I've since come to describe it as 'a perfect jewel of a museum.'

I was particularly moved by the spirit of inclusiveness that pervades the Museum's holdings and programming, as evidenced by its invitation to our Armenian ensemble. To have a Christian group from Armenia welcomed so warmly into a space dedicated to Muslim heritage says something important about what this institution stands for.

My heartfelt thanks to the Aga Khan Museum for fostering such a harmonious and critically needed space — one that stays true to its mission of celebrating Muslim heritage while serving as a vibrant meeting ground for people of all traditions."

— John Hodian, The Naghash Ensemble

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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A MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

A Message from Sascha Priewe, Director, Collections and Public Programs and Nadia Humayun, Director, Development

We wish to begin with how profoundly grateful we are to everyone who contributed so generously in 2025 to fostering a space where the arts are this vast conversation between the past and the present, between today and tomorrow, through which we can peacefully explore our differences, come to know each other's stories, and build a shared future through these encounters. This is the special magic of the Aga Khan Museum.

It is our hope that you see yourself reflected throughout these pages, whether as a visitor, member, donor, or global supporter, or partner organization. Your commitment helps propel our mission forward every day.

Thanks to you, thousands of people were able to engage with programs and exhibitions that celebrate the contributions of Muslim art and culture. We see this in real-world impact every day: children seeing their cultures represented in a museum for the very first time, or families with limited financial means enjoying world-class performances free of charge at events like our Rhythms of Canada festival. **Behind every success and moment of impact is each and every one of you.**

We hope you enjoy looking back through 2025 and joining us in celebrating a rich year of cultural connection and joy.

Nadia Humayun
Director, Development

Sascha Priewe
Director, Collections and Public Programs

A MESSAGE FROM PRINCE AMYN AGA KHAN

Chair, Board of Directors

I am delighted to join you in reflecting together on a remarkable year at the Aga Khan Museum. As global citizens, we are faced with many challenges every day. Now more than ever, the founding vision of this Museum remains vitally important: to foster worthy and exciting educational programming through the arts that helps to fight prejudice and preconceived ideas, and which brings people together, showing them how much we share.

In 2025, we had many occasions, through the Museum's programming, to educate the senses of our visitors and teach them to see new beauty in unsuspected ways. In this retrospective, you will see many examples of how this is accomplished in practice, both in Toronto and globally when we lend artworks from our Collection, have staff travel to offer educational activities or talks, and contribute to partnerships with world-renowned cultural institutions. Woven through everything we do is a reminder that culture is ultimately binding as opposed to dividing and that our senses can be educated: we can be taught to see, to hear, and to taste.

I look forward to seeing the Museum's expanded reach and impact grow through our global programming in the years to come. A particular highlight from last year was the Museum's first-ever International Gala held in Houston, Texas, where we were able to celebrate the generosity of our supporters. We will do more such international programming in the future.

Nothing we do would be possible without the dedication of our volunteers and supporters. As we look to the future, it is imperative that we reach ever more people to engage them in conversations and collaboration grounded in the principles of pluralism. Thank you for helping us to grow the communities we serve. The impact of your contributions will be felt for generations to come.

Prince Amyn Aga Khan
Chair, Board of Directors

CELEBRATING DR. ULRIKE AL-KHAMIS, PAST DIRECTOR AND CEO, AGA KHAN MUSEUM

In February 2026, Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis retired from her role as Director and Chief Executive Officer, concluding nine years of service to the Museum, including five years as CEO.

During her tenure, Dr. Al-Khamis played a pivotal role in shaping the Museum's curatorial and programmatic vision, strengthening its international profile and advancing its mission to foster intercultural understanding through art, culture, and creative dialogue. Under her leadership, the Museum expanded its global partnerships, including a significant collaboration with the UAE Ministry of Culture and a renewed MoU with the Louvre.

She personally curated or oversaw the curation of innovative, audience-focused and globally recognized exhibitions, including *The Moon: A Voyage Through Time*, in 2019, the celebrated *Light: Visionary Perspectives*, and, most recently, *As the Sun Appears from Beyond: Twenty Years of the Al Burda Award*.

Dr. Al-Khamis was also instrumental in expanding the Museum's intercultural Education and Living Arts programs, both on-site and globally through digital platforms, significantly deepening its reputation as a leading learning institution for intercultural dialogue and pluralism through the arts of Muslim civilizations.

As a leader in the cultural and museological field, Dr. Al-Khamis consistently championed the arts and the Museum as powerful forces for positive change, community cohesion and intercultural diplomacy — within Canada and around the world — driving the mandate and vision of the Museum's founder.

We honour Dr. Al-Khamis' leadership and dedication, and value her continued support as a champion of the Museum.

Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis
Past Director and CEO,
Aga Khan Museum

It has been an extraordinary privilege to lead the Aga Khan Museum. Over the past nine years, I have had the opportunity to work alongside an exceptional team and a global network of partners to realize an ambitious vision for the Museum and grow its impact at home and abroad. I am deeply proud of what we have built together and confident in the institution's continued future growth, impact, and success.

— Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis

ENDOWMENT FUND

It is the Museum's immense privilege to safeguard and share the stories behind its ever-expanding Collection of artistic masterpieces.

We are deeply grateful for the vital support of dedicated donors who share our commitment to building a stable and growing source of funding for the Museum. This support enables world-class collections care and the delivery of exciting programming across exhibitions, education, performing arts, and beyond.

Over the past several years, the Endowment has experienced exciting growth with a strong trajectory for the future. Supporting the Endowment allows you to invest in the Museum today, while ensuring your legacy lives on through the countless people your generosity will positively impact in the decades to come.

To learn more, contact Nadia Humayun, Director, Development, at nadia.humayun@akdn.org. Thank you for partnering with us to ensure the Museum has a bright and stable future.

An endowment turns generosity into permanence. It gives the Museum the confidence to plan for the future, knowing we can count on endowed funds. Helping build this enduring foundation is one of the most meaningful ways we honour both the Museum's mission and the people who believe in it.

— Thomas Lentz, Vice-Chair, Board of Directors and Chair of the Development and Fundraising Committee

EXHIBITION HIGHLIGHTS

As the Sun Appears from Beyond

Twenty Years of the Al Burda Award

June 14, 2025–February 16, 2026

Temporary Exhibitions Gallery

Co-curated by Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis, Past Director and CEO of the Aga Khan Museum, and Bita Pourvash, Curator, Aga Khan Museum

ontemporary
Calligraphy

A Journey of Light

As the Sun Appears from Beyond: Twenty Years of the Al Burda Award celebrated over two decades of contemporary Islamic art, highlighting its enduring legacy, creativity, and spiritual resonance. Making its North American debut after opening at the 18th Al Burda Award ceremony at the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the exhibition was presented in collaboration with the UAE Ministry of Culture.

In 2023, the Museum and the UAE Ministry of Culture entered into a historic Memorandum of Understanding grounded in a shared commitment to intercultural dialogue and artistic excellence. The exhibition was conceived in partnership with three Emirati art practitioners, recipients of the inaugural Al Burda Grant, a professional capacity-building residency hosted at the Museum.

Inspired by the Quranic verse, "There has come to you from Allah a light and a clear Book" (*Surat Al-Ma'idah*, 5:15), the exhibition traced the journey of divine light — Al-Noor — a theme shared by both the 2024 Al Burda Award and the Museum's 10th anniversary.

Bringing together more than 60 captivating works from the Al Burda Award collection, placed in dialogue with selections from the Aga Khan Museum Collection, the exhibition showcased classical and contemporary artworks featuring Arabic calligraphy, poetry, and intricate ornamentation — all celebrating Islamic artistic traditions.

Sharon Avery,
President & CEO,
Toronto Foundation

"Above and really beyond my expectations. I visited the main gallery on the ground level and the gallery on the 2nd floor, and both were brilliant. Manuscripts of Qur'an, *Shahnameh*, and *Nezami's Khamseh* were beyond description. The Museum's architecture, nice staff, live music performed by an Iranian artist on the kamancheh, and informative notes next to each item ... all made my experience this past Sunday a wonderful one. I truly appreciate the staff and management for such a great work."

— Museum Visitor, October 2025

Exhibition Opening Celebrations

On June 16, the Museum was privileged to welcome a distinguished group of Museum supporters and special guests to the opening celebration of *As the Sun Appears from Beyond: Twenty Years of the Al Burda Award*.

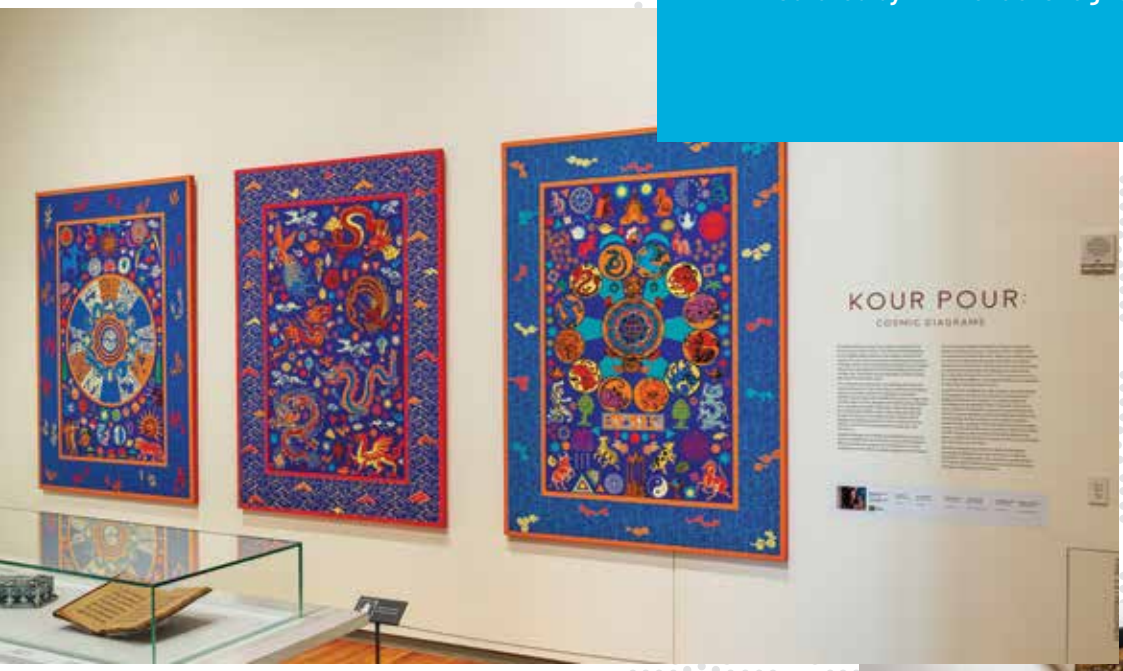
The occasion was honoured by the presence of Prince Aly Muhammad Aga Khan, His Excellency Sheikh Salem Al Qassimi, Minister of Culture of the United Arab Emirates, as well as members of the diplomatic community and representatives from all levels of government, including municipal, provincial, and federal officials. This collaboration marked a significant step in advancing our shared commitment to intercultural dialogue through the arts.

Illarra Riyad, Hikaya Project

MUSEUM COLLECTIONS GALLERY

Kour Pour: Cosmic Diagrams

February 25, 2025–February 22, 2026
Curated by Dr. Michael Chagnon



MUSEUM COLLECTIONS GALLERY

Aisha Khalid: Your Way Begins On The Other Side

May 6, 2025–May 25, 2026
Curated by Dr. Michael Chagnon

MUSEUM ATRIUM AND FAÇADE,
RASHEED DHUKA AND NOORUDDIN KHAWJA FAMILY GALLERY

Inner Structures — Outer Rhythms

June 24, 2025–July 14, 2026
Curated by Guest Curator Dr. Huda Smitshuijzen AbiFarès and Aga Khan Museum Curator Bita Pourvash

AGA KHAN PARK

Hassan Hajjaj: La Salle De Gym Des Femmes Arabes

September 13, 2025–September 7, 2026
Curated by Marianne Fenton

PROGRAMMING HIGHLIGHTS

The Museum's programming invites participants from all ages, backgrounds, and beliefs to come together to explore cross-cultural art making and storytelling. We are proud to partner with many organizations across the Greater Toronto Area and beyond to create innovative and impactful opportunities to celebrate the power of art and beauty.

We're living in times that are troubling and concerning to many people. It is in such times that an institution like our Museum can make a real difference. Rather than ossifying our differences, we make space for cross-cultural conversations, for moments of joy, and for contemplation. And it is through the arts and beauty that this can be achieved most effectively — and we have spades of it to share.

— Dr. Sascha Priewe, Director of Collections & Public Programs, Aga Khan Museum

GLENN GOULD FOUNDATION'S PROMISE OF MUSIC

In October 2025, the Museum was honoured to host The Promise of Music: The First World Congress on the Social Impact of Music, emceed by celebrated actor Viggo Mortensen, with a keynote address from General Romeo Dallaire. The Congress convened some of the world's most inspiring artists, performers, and changemakers for five transformative days of concerts, public forums, special events, in-school concerts, and bold new ideas. Featured artists from around the world included the Afghan National Institute of Music, the Firdaus Orchestra, the Recycled Orchestra of Cateura, Memphis-based dancer Lil Buck, and many others.

In partnership with

TD POP-UP PERFORMANCES

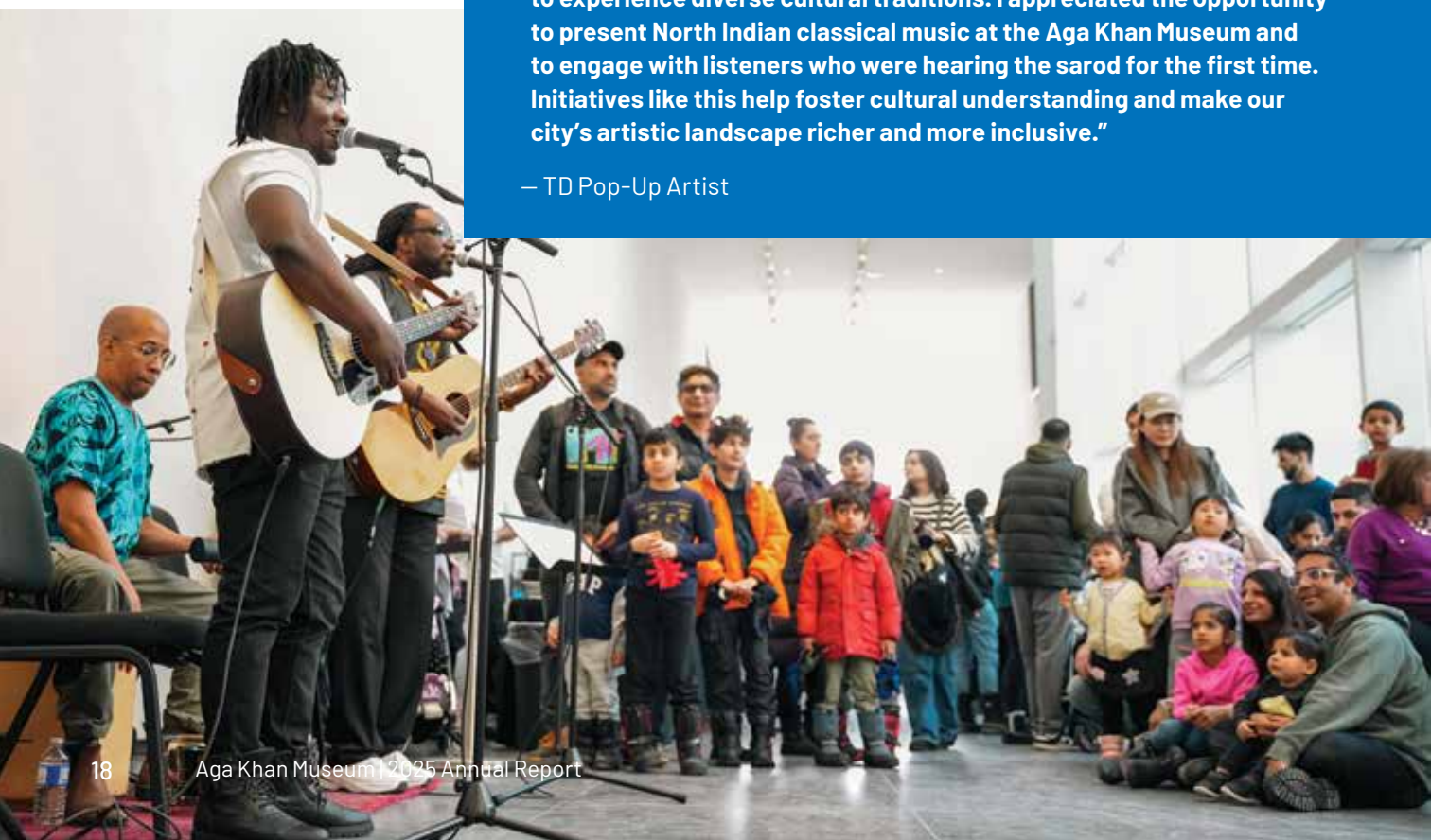
Each week, the TD Pop-Up Performances program invites emerging and established artists into the Museum's Atrium to present culturally diverse, accessible live music free of charge to all visitors. Performances range from poetry and dance to music that reflects the rich tapestry of world regions, from the Balkans to the Nordic countries, and from the Middle East to Asia.

The program is designed to support the development of performers to hone their presentation skills, build their professional portfolios, and advance their careers in the arts and culture sector.

Supported by TD Bank Group

"The TD Pop-up Performances program creates valuable spaces for artists to share their music with new audiences and for the community to experience diverse cultural traditions. I appreciated the opportunity to present North Indian classical music at the Aga Khan Museum and to engage with listeners who were hearing the sarod for the first time. Initiatives like this help foster cultural understanding and make our city's artistic landscape richer and more inclusive."

— TD Pop-Up Artist



POEMS IN PASSAGE

The Aga Khan Museum is proud to be a partner of Poems in Passage, an initiative that works to bring poetry into public spaces, including transit systems and cultural landmarks in the Toronto area. In 2025, the Museum contributed the poetry of Rumi, Ibn Arabi, and Rabindranath Tagore, reaching millions of Toronto transit riders. Featuring a mix of emerging and established poets and designed with an equity lens, Poems in Passage sparks dialogue, fosters inclusivity, and makes poetry accessible to millions — one passage at a time.

In partnership with

Poems in Passage

BMO FREE WEDNESDAYS

BMO Free Wednesdays is a cornerstone of the Museum's access initiatives. It opens doors to new and returning visitors and helps ensure that the Museum remains a welcoming and accessible space for all, regardless of socioeconomic background.

Through this program, thousands of visitors encounter works of art that span centuries of artistic creativity and connection across Muslim societies and experience the Museum as a place for learning, reflection, and community gathering.

Between January and December 2025, the BMO Free Wednesdays Program welcomed **14,766** visitors, representing 14% of the Museum's total annual visitation.

Presented by BMO Financial Group

BMO

"It was amazing to know that the Museum is providing Free Wednesdays, and we are definitely going to visit again and again on Wednesdays. Thank you"

— BMO Free Wednesdays attendee

RHYTHMS OF CANADA

The Rhythms of Canada festival celebrated Canada's rich cultural tapestry with two days of world-class performances, hands-on activities for all ages, and delicious culinary offerings. In 2025, the entire site — from the Museum to the Aga Khan Park — came alive with music, art, and vibrant celebration. Additionally, the Museum was privileged to host a moving Canadian Citizenship Ceremony on July 1, welcoming 100 new Canadians at the Museum and festival.

Silver Sponsors

FESTIVALS

Over 25,000 people attended a festival at the Museum last year. Many attendees were newcomers to Canada or visitors from other countries, with limited financial means to access art and culture. Festivals honour the Museum's diverse audiences by celebrating cultures from around the world, as performers take centre stage in an open and welcoming environment accessible to all.

Festivals also provide an important opportunity for partnership and for inviting new communities into the Museum. An annual favourite, Family Day Weekend programming was created in partnership with the Chinese Cultural Centre of Greater Toronto. The event delighted visitors with Lunar New Year-themed workshops, activities, and performances, including lion dances.

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

"On June 30th, 2025, I signed up to volunteer at the Rhythms of Canada festival at the Aga Khan Museum, proudly sponsored by TD. I joined TD colleagues and Museum staff to welcome guests and answer questions. It was an amazing experience meeting people and seeing the joy and smiles at this festival that was full of activities for the whole family.

The festival was so good that I brought my family the next day, Canada Day, to enjoy the activities with my kids, such as face painting, the Lego booth, the Bata Shoe Museum exhibit, the Toronto Zoo [activities] and the drumming performance.

I had a great experience and look forward to the next edition of this festival."

— Keith Kadete,CRO Team Manager, TD Insurance

TAPESTRY JAM

Presented in the Museum's open-air Courtyard and curated by Toronto-based artist and organizer Shaunt Raffi, Tapestry Jam brought together four musicians who remained anonymous to one another — and to the audience — until the moment they stepped on stage. With no rehearsals or prior collaboration, what unfolded was a raw, unfiltered exploration of sound that blurred the lines between cultures, genres, and traditions.

MUSEUM RESIDENCY TAKES CENTRE STAGE

In the summer of 2024, eight Humber College Students came together to form the band Solara. Inspired by the architecture of the Aga Khan Museum and the *Light: Visionary Perspectives* exhibition, Solara composed a suite of six songs, each offering a unique answer to the question "How does light guide us?"

Invited back to the Museum to perform at the festival, Solara showcased original songs inspired by light and screened a documentary capturing their creative journey.

Presented with support from Bashir and Farida Dhanani and Family.

LIGHT UP THE DARK

In 2025, the Museum continued to provide mentorship opportunities for emerging student artists. From December 27 to 29, the Museum's front façade came alive with 11 mesmerizing projections created by students and graduates of OCAD University's Experimental Animation program. Inspired by objects from the Museum's Collection and exhibitions, these radiant displays transformed the night into a vibrant canvas of colour.

Presented in Partnership with OCAD U

CELEBRATING RAMADAN

During Ramadan, the Museum hosted an iftar in partnership with ISNA Canada, the Canadian branch of the Islamic Society of North America, bringing the Ummah and friends together. The evening, A Night with Rumi, featured a keynote address by Ustadh Feraidoon Mojadedi, an esteemed scholar and interpreter of Rumi's teachings.

SUMMER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION: ORIGINAL WAYS OF KNOWING, BEING AND RELATING

In June, the Museum was honoured to partner with the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre to celebrate the summer solstice, which marks the longest day of the year — a time of light, renewal, and connection. The celebration included drop-in activities for schools and the local community, including a tipi display, hands-on arts and crafts, drumming and dance demonstrations, and an evening concert.

The program is produced in partnership with the Aga Khan Museum and the Toronto Council Fire Native Cultural Centre. Together, we are committed to creating meaningful educational opportunities that foster cultural understanding, promote reconciliation, and amplify Indigenous voices through the arts.

This project has been made possible [in part] by the Government of Canada.

Ce projet a été rendu possible [en partie] grâce au gouvernement du Canada.

Funded by the Government of Canada | Canada

NAKSHA BY TANVEER ALAM

In July, the Museum's Courtyard was brought to life with a celebration of the richness and evolution of Kathak. Choreographer and performer Tanveer Alam presented Naksha, featuring two choreographed works — one traditional, accompanied by live musicians, and one contemporary interpretation that reimagines Kathak's principles through collective authorship.

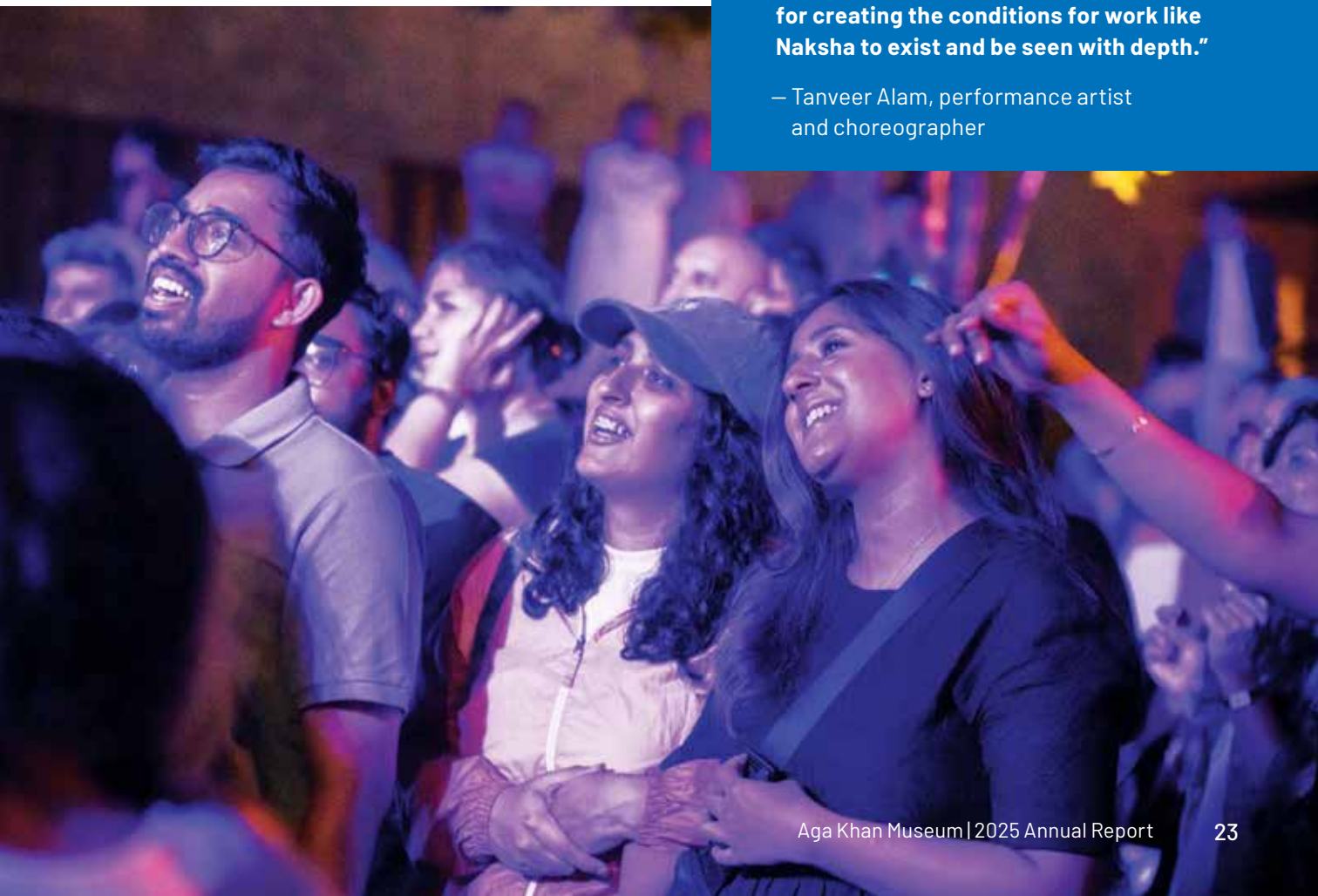
This choreographic approach mirrored the aesthetic values found in Islamic ornamentation, as explored in the Museum's exhibition *As the Sun Appears from Beyond: Twenty Years of the Al Burda Award*. In Naksha, these visual principles were embodied through dance, extending the exhibition's ideas beyond the gallery and into performance.

"Working with the Aga Khan Museum for the first time was a significant experience for my practice.

As a Muslim artist working within Kathak, a form with a deep relationship to Islamic aesthetics and ideas, presenting this work at the Aga Khan Museum carried particular meaning. I work both in Canada and in India, the homeland of Kathak, and I am aware that certain aspects of my practice and artistic influences are not always supported or resourced in the same ways across contexts. The opportunity to develop and present this work here felt both affirming and rare.

Through this process, I learned a great deal about working at a larger institutional scale and felt genuinely supported at every stage of production. I am grateful to the Aga Khan Museum for the openness, care, and practical support it offers artists, and for creating the conditions for work like Naksha to exist and be seen with depth."

— Tanveer Alam, performance artist and choreographer



NUIT BLANCHE 2025: VOICES OF THE CITY

Nuit Blanche returned to the Museum, the Aga Khan Park, and the Ismaili Centre Toronto, transforming them into a hub of art, music, and cultural exchange. Visitors journeyed through the many voices that shape our city in an all-night experience featuring captivating installations, live performances, poetry, and visual art, all in celebration of the city-wide theme, Translating the City.

The Museum's programming included two original productions by Grammy Award- and Juno Award-winning producer, composer, and engineer Justin Gray. Each piece offered a unique immersive experience that placed the audience at the centre of the music, surrounded by the musicians, and paired with captivating cinematic visuals that brought the performances to life.

Nuit Blanche is presented by

TORONTO

Pop-up Performances at the Museum are supported by TD Bank Group

TD

Programming Partners

small world music

Poems in Passage

WORLD SERIES WATCH PARTY

For the first time since 1993, the Toronto Blue Jays made it all the way to the championship series. The Museum invited community members to come together, united by their love of sport, to watch the games live, projected onto the Museum's façade. We were proud to host Members and newcomers to the Museum as families and friends gathered around fire pits and cheered on the Jays together.

CREATE AND CONNECT

Launched in 2024, Create and Connect is a community-centred initiative addressing social isolation and barriers to cultural access among low-income and newcomer seniors. The program is designed to nurture creative expression, enhance well-being, and support lifelong learning through mindful art-making and interactive tours of artworks in the Museum's galleries.

In 2025, the Museum partnered with local retirement homes and service organizations in North York, Scarborough, Thorncliffe, and Flemingdon Park to welcome 230 seniors.

Thanks to donor support, barriers to participation were removed by providing complimentary transportation to and from the Museum.

LEARNING

Through our education programs we seek to position the Aga Khan Museum — locally and globally — as the premier educational resource for intercultural learning around the arts of Muslim cultures. We aim to foster dialogue, empathy and understanding between Muslims and non-Muslims and affect positive social change, contributing to a more peaceful world.

In 2025, there were over 75,000 people who participated in educational programming through the Museum, a 25% increase over 2024. Programming supported growth in family-focused and intergenerational offerings with increased emphasis on experiential learning within school programs.

As an educator with PDSB, I had the privilege of partnering with the Aga Khan Museum on multiple occasions. Their commitment to quality education, cultural understanding, and pluralism has been invaluable in creating equitable and affirming learning environments for Muslim students and fostering intercultural dialogue across the school community.

— Farah Slimati, Principal, Treeline Public School, Brampton – Peel District School Board

With special thanks to the Weston Family Foundation through the Weston Family Growing Minds Program.

More than 17,000 people engaged in community arts projects facilitated by the Museum.

30,000 children experienced hands-on activities and created artworks that fostered their imagination, independence, and individuality.

The Aga Khan Museum and the Ontario Science Centre were awarded the 2025 Ontario Galleries Key Partnership Award for the collaboration on the Illuminating Minds: The Art of Science and Light program, designed for young learners.

OUTREACH PROGRAMS

Our partners have identified a number of persistent barriers that limit equitable access to cultural learning opportunities. Most importantly, schools often lack the resources to fund both program fees and transportation for field trips, making it difficult for students to access experiential learning outside the classroom.

Thanks to dedicated donor funding, the Museum was able to invest in outreach programs that extend its unique learning opportunities beyond the walls of the building. As a result, outreach programs grew by 146% between 2024 and 2025.

In 2025, the Museum was thrilled to offer global programming in Dubai and Vancouver, while also deepening its reach into community festivals and schools across the Greater Toronto Area.

SENSORY BACKPACKS AND SOCIAL NARRATIVES

Museums are vibrant places filled with movement, sound, and light. While these qualities can make a museum visit exciting, they may sometimes feel overwhelming for neurodivergent visitors, including people on the autism spectrum and those with sensory processing needs. We are committed to creating an environment where everyone can explore, learn, and connect at their own pace, in a way that feels safe, welcoming, and supportive.

To support this goal, the Museum has introduced two new resources for neurodivergent visitors: sensory backpacks and social narratives — step-by-step visual guides that walk visitors through the Museum experience, so they know what to expect before and during their visit.

Sensory backpacks are available free of charge for visitors to borrow at the Farida & Ally Esmail & Family Guest Services Centre to support comfort and accessibility during their visit.

We acknowledge the support of the Canada Council for the Arts.

Canada Council for the Arts | Conseil des Arts du Canada

ISLAMIC HERITAGE MONTH

For the past decade, the Museum has been running school and outreach programs celebrating Islamic Heritage Month (IHM) and has built relationships with many school boards across Ontario to address Islamophobia and systemic racism, through the arts. Our work with the Peel District School Board — the first school board in Canada to adopt a strategy to affirm Muslim identities and dismantle Islamophobia — as well as the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), has demonstrated the need for programs that celebrate the past and present accomplishments of Muslim scholars and artists.

October was one of the most active and far-reaching months of the year, anchored by Islamic Heritage Month, the Glenn Gould Foundation school partnership, and a series of cross-institutional collaborations. Collectively, these programs and partner collaborations reached over 13,500 participants across on-site, outreach, virtual, and community-based learning — the highest monthly engagement of 2025.

The Museum's virtual engagement reached 3,863 students and 251 teachers. Highlights included a TDSB-wide livestream with over 2,400 viewers, and a dedicated Islamic Heritage Month Talk drawing 239 participants.

In addition, 5,895 visitors engaged through off-site programs delivered in partnership with the Toronto Public Library and Mississauga Public Library.

BLACK HISTORY MONTH – SAMBA TOURÉ

Honouring Black History Month, the Museum featured a performance by Malian guitar legend Samba Touré. Extending the performance beyond our walls, the Museum delivered two performances at Toronto and Peel Region public schools, reaching over 900 students and teachers.

TAKING DUENDE INTERNATIONAL FLAMENCO FESTIVAL INTO SCHOOLS

In 2025, the Museum expanded the reach of the Duende: Flamenco Festival by bringing Duende directly into school auditoriums. Through four school visits, the program engaged 1,585 students and 96 teachers, offering interactive flamenco experiences that introduced students to the art form's multicultural roots and core elements — dance, rhythm, and music — through active participation and live performance.

Carmen Romero served as Associate Curator for the 2025 Duende International Flamenco Festival.

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

COLLECTIONS

NEW ACQUISITION HIGHLIGHTS

Through strategic acquisitions, the Museum continues to grow its Collection of more than 1,200 masterpieces, including manuscripts, paintings, ceramics, and textiles from the 9th to the 21st century.

Hayv Kahraman, Nabog, 2014, oil on linen. 2025.2.1.

Nabog is a breathtaking work by Kurdish-Iraqi artist Hayv Kahraman from her series *How Iraqi Are You?* In *Nabog*, Kahraman transforms personal memory into a stunning contemporary painting that draws on her childhood in Iraq before her family fled the country during the First Gulf War.

The title refers to a jujube tree from Kahraman's childhood garden and to a Kurdish nursery rhyme about sharing fruit. Inscribed beneath six interconnected female figures, the verse evokes themes of generosity, reciprocity, and community.

Drawing inspiration from art historical references such as Japanese hanging scrolls and illustrated Iraqi manuscripts, including the *Maqamat* by author al-Hariri (d.1122), Kahraman creates a powerful meditation on memory, identity, and cultural belonging.

Acquired with the support of The Khimji Foundation, made possible by Naznin and Mahmood Khimji.

Dish, Kerman, Iran, ca. 1615-1640, fritware, underglaze painted, 2024.2.2.

In 2025, the Museum was fortunate to receive a donation of nine artworks from Board Chair Prince Amyn Aga Khan, including this exquisite platter.

Around the turn of the 17th century, potters in the Iranian city of Kerman began closely imitating prized Chinese blue-and-white porcelains. According to period sources, their ceramics were so similar to Chinese models that local collectors would host gatherings where guests were challenged to guess whether an object originated from Chinese or Iranian kilns. This massive Iranian platter is one such faithful emulation, reflecting a type of Chinese export porcelain known as Kraak ware. The motifs in the panels around the rim are derived from Chinese models, where they functioned as Buddhist auspicious symbols; however, these meanings were likely not fully understood by Iranian makers and owners.

Gift of Prince Amyn Aga Khan to the Aga Khan Museum Collection.

Circular Lusterware Flower Basin with Motif of Musician and Animals, Kato Takuo, Japan, 1985, glazed lustre ceramic. 2025.5.1

An outstanding addition to the Collection, this basin highlights the Islamic world's broader and lasting cultural influence on the non-Islamic world. It is an extraordinary example of Kato Takuo's mastery and demonstrates the ceramic traditions, influences, and techniques that inform his work. A designated Living National Treasure in Japan, Kato was recognized for his teaching and training in Mino ceramics and for his decades of research into and reproductions of Islamic lustre ceramics. The Museum was proud to showcase this work in a special display at the opening of the Ismaili Center, Houston.

Acquired with the support of Mr. & Mrs. Roshanali Manji Dhrolia & Family.

Portrait Depicting a Man, China, mid-18th-mid-19th century, reverse glass painting, 2025.8.1.

Portrait Depicting a Woman, China, mid-18th-mid-19th century, reverse glass painting, 2025.8.2.

These two reverse-glass paintings align with the Museum's prioritization of acquisitions that exemplify cross-cultural interactions, in an example of art (and potentially artists) circulating between China and South Asia. Given the rarity of Chinese reverse-glass paintings depicting South Asian subjects, these works are noteworthy additions to the Museum's Collection.

Gift of Lisa Balfour Bowen in honour of The Right Honourable Adrienne Clarkson, 26th Governor General of Canada, to commemorate the Aga Khan Museum's 10th anniversary.

COLLECTIONS LOANS AND CONSERVATION HIGHLIGHTS

LOANS

The Museum is fortunate to have many sought-after artworks in its Permanent Collection that institutions around the world request on loan to enhance their own exhibitions. In 2025, Museum artworks travelled to the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, England, the Ismaili Center Houston, the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and the Gardiner Museum in Toronto.

Tile, AKM862; Turkey, Iznik, 1560-1570; Fritware, underglazed and painted. Loaned to the Gardiner Museum.

Two Folios, From A Manuscript Known As The "Blue Qur'an," AKM477; Kairouan, Tunisia; ca. 950; parchment coloured blue with indigo, gold, and silver leaf outlined in ink. Loaned to the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

CONSERVATION

Visitors to the Museum may not realize that the artworks on display in our galleries represent only a portion of the Permanent Collection. Behind the scenes, ongoing work is undertaken to study, document, and conserve Collection artworks.

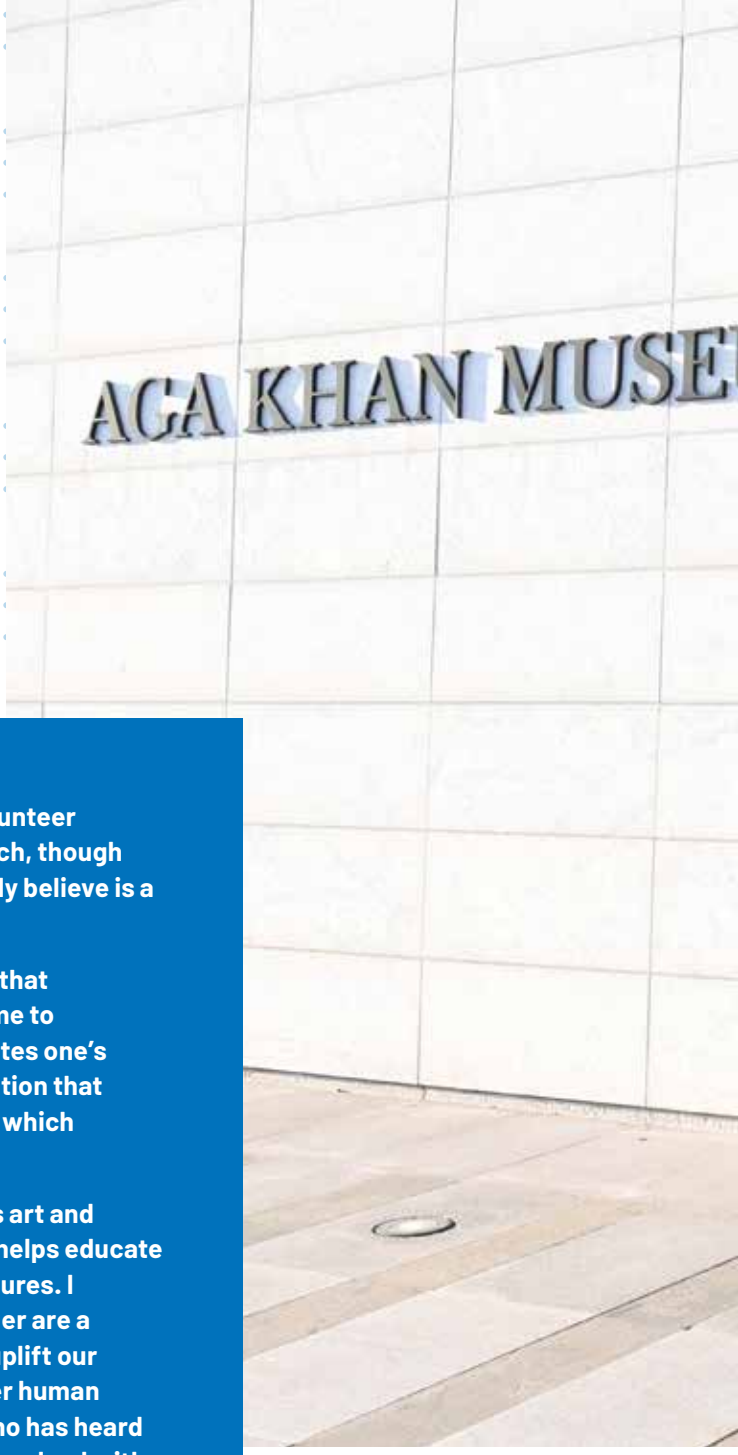
In 2025, 156 Collection artworks were assessed by an expert conservator, and 71 artworks underwent treatment to stabilize their condition.

Your Way Begins on the Other Side

This monumental tapestry by acclaimed Pakistani artist Aisha Khalid was the first contemporary artwork acquired by the Museum. Originally displayed in 2014 in the Museum's Atrium, it had been exposed to open-air conditions, prolonged light exposure, and strain from the physical weight of the one million gold pins used in its design. To restore the artwork to optimal condition, conservators at Toronto Art Restoration Inc. (TARI) carried out comprehensive conservation treatment, enhancing both its visual appearance and structural integrity. Following this treatment, *Your Way Begins on the Other Side* was reinstalled as part of the Museum's 10th anniversary celebrations.

Gift of Leila Mohamed Rahim, Zul Mohamed Rahim, and Nurmohamed Amir Rahim, 2015.

VOLUNTEERS



"Since 2022, I have chosen to volunteer with the Aga Khan Museum, which, though located in Toronto, Canada, I truly believe is a 'Museum without Walls.'

I chose to support an institution that promotes art because I have come to understand that it is art that ignites one's imagination. It is human imagination that allows one to take a leap of faith which elevates the human spirit.

The Aga Khan Museum promotes art and artists, but more importantly, it helps educate us about the world's diverse cultures. I believe art and education together are a powerful combination that can uplift our spirits and help us become better human beings. I encourage everyone who has heard of the Aga Khan Museum to get involved with it in some way. I am grateful to the leadership at the Museum for offering their unstinted support of my work as a humble volunteer."

— Shiraz Nazarali, Georgia, USA

Volunteers are vital to powering the Museum both in Toronto and around the world. If you visited the Museum last year, you may have encountered one of our cherished volunteers greeting you on arrival, in the Museum Shop, at the gallery doors, at the coat check, in the Rupani Family Patrons' Lounge, or on a Museum tour. Volunteers also play an important behind-the-scenes role, supporting all aspects of Museum operations.

Outside of Toronto, volunteers support the Museum's international programming and global supporter stewardship efforts in cities and regions around the world, including London, Dubai, and the United States.

In 2025, the Museum was supported by nearly 250 volunteers who collectively contributed an incredible 308,580 hours of their time to Museum activities and operations.

LAPIS BALL

On September 26, nearly 400 guests gathered at the Aga Khan Museum and Aga Khan Park for the 2025 Lapis Ball. The event raised over $1.4 million in support of programs and initiatives that spark wonder, curiosity, and understanding of Muslim cultures, and promote more peaceful and inclusive societies through the arts. Journalist Farah Nasser served as the evening's emcee, guiding guests through a dynamic dinner program, including an inspiring fireside chat with Museum Board Chair Prince Amyn Aga Khan and Museum Board Vice-Chair Dr. Thomas Lentz, followed by a stirring performance by Tawhida Tanya Evanson and Saeed Kamjoo.

The evening concluded with a Sundown Soirée after-party featuring a custom-blend tea tasting, live calligraphy, exploration of the galleries, and a DJ set by MXK (Makram) and Hinad Al Shuhuf in the Museum's open-air Courtyard.

2025 Lapis Ball Sponsors

We are incredibly grateful to our sponsors for their generous support.

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

With special thanks to Salima Morani and Sadiq Dosani for their matching gift support of all funds raised at the event to support the Museum's award-winning education programs.

INTERNATIONAL GALA

On May 19, the Museum held its first-ever international Gala in Houston, Texas.

Over 450 supporters from the United States, Canada, and beyond came together to raise funds in support of the Museum. The event featured welcome remarks from Prince Amyn Aga Khan, Museum Board Chair, and John Whitmire, Mayor of Houston. Guests also enjoyed a fireside conversation on the power of art with Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis, Past Director & CEO of the Aga Khan Museum; Tom Lentz, Board Vice-Chair of the Aga Khan Museum; and Gary Tinterow, Director of the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston.

Funds raised supported the Museum's work to connect people globally through programs that celebrate pluralism through the power of art.

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DONOR WALL CELEBRATION

"It is through leadership giving like yours that we have the power to make transformational impact and change. Together, we are not merely displaying beautiful art and artifacts in isolation; we are changing perceptions, revealing beauty, and empowering visitors and entire communities not only with knowledge but with pride of place and community."

— Prince Amyn Aga Khan,
Aga Khan Museum Board Chair

On December 6, the Museum was filled with warmth, generosity, and a shared sense of purpose as we gathered to celebrate donors newly recognized on the Museum's Donor Wall.

The event featured an afternoon of conversation, live music, and a rare glimpse of artworks from the Museum's vaults. Guests were treated to a special conversation between Prince Amyn Aga Khan, Museum Board Chair, and The Honourable Elizabeth Dowdeswell, Board Member and former Lieutenant Governor of Ontario, on the power of beauty and the Museum's role in fostering cultural connection.

It was a true joy to celebrate our supporters and their passion for the Aga Khan Museum. Donor generosity and continued commitment make it possible for the Museum to educate, inspire, and connect cultures through the arts.

GLOBAL PROGRAMMING

GLOBAL ENCOUNTERS FESTIVAL, DUBAI, UAE

The Museum was proud to support the 2025 Global Encounters Festival with a Pop-Up Experience showcasing five high-tech holographic recreations of artworks from the Museum's Collection. Museum staff also presented educational workshops and camps, and Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis and Amirali Alibhai, Head of Performing Arts, participated as panelists throughout the festival.

Global supporters were invited to a special breakfast featuring remarks from Dr. Ulrike Al-Khamis and artist Javed Jah, whose work was featured in the Museum's Pop-Up Experience. Supporters also enjoyed an excursion to Abu Dhabi, including a private tour at the Louvre Abu Dhabi (while closed to the public), the Abrahamic Family House, and teamLab Phenomena Abu Dhabi.

The Aga Khan Museum Pop-Up Experience was generously supported By Shafiq Navroz Nasser & Farzana Jaffarali Poonawala.

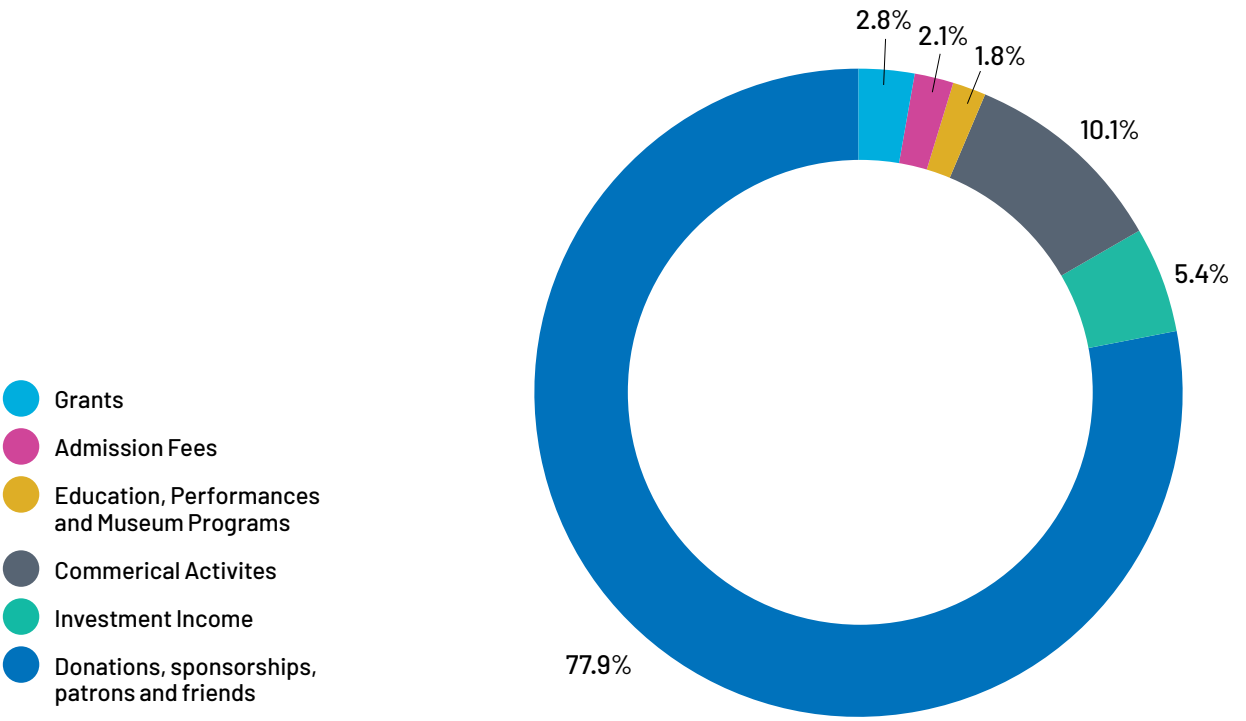
VANCOUVER, BC

In October, the Museum was invited by the Ismaili Tariqah and Religious Education Board (ITREB) for British Columbia to engage West Coast multigenerational audiences through interactive educational activities.

While in Vancouver, we were delighted to reconnect with our local supporters at several events, sharing the impact of their incredible generosity in enabling meaningful programs that spark creativity among students, families, adults, and seniors alike.

OPERATIONS OVERVIEW

Revenue



In 2025, the Aga Khan Museum demonstrated strong financial performance and continued growth in philanthropic and earned revenue streams. The Museum raised $17.4 million through donations, sponsorships, and contributions from patrons and supporters — representing a 19% increase compared to 2024. This achievement reflects the sustained generosity of the Museum's donor community and includes contributions to the Endowment Fund, which plays a critical role in ensuring the institution's long-term financial resilience.

Complementing this philanthropic success, the Museum also experienced robust growth in self-generated revenue. Income from admissions, educational programs, and performing arts initiatives was further strengthened by commercial activities, including parking, private-event rentals, retail operations, and food and beverage services. Collectively, these revenue streams contributed to a 14% year-over-year increase in total revenue.

The Sultanate of Aceh
Le Sultanat d'Aceh

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2025 Aga Khan Museum Board Membership

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Thomas Lentz, Vice-Chair of the Board and Chair of the Development and Fundraising Committee

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Riaz Ahmed, Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee

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Chris Eaton, Chief Operating Officer

Karim Haji, Chief Talent Officer

Kelly Frances, Director, Marketing and Communications

Nadia Humayun, Director, Development

Sascha Priewe, Director, Collections and Public Programs

Zahra Tejpar, Director, Legal Affairs

*Lists current as of December 31, 2025

IN MEMORIAM

Remembering Hilary M. Weston,
founding member of the Board of Directors

Hilary Weston brought to the Museum not only her deep passion for culture and the arts, but also a lifelong commitment to philanthropy and civic engagement. Her visionary leadership and advocacy played a pivotal role in helping establish the Museum as a world-class institution dedicated to building bridges between cultures through art and education.

She was instrumental in championing our early development as one of the first contributors to the Museum's Endowment Fund and continued to support the Museum through her thoughtful guidance and generosity, including the launch of the Weston Family Growing Minds Program in 2018, support for the production of This Being Human, and sponsorship of the Lapis Ball.

We are profoundly grateful for her enduring legacy, which lives on through the many lives touched by the Museum's work.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

The Aga Khan Museum gratefully acknowledges the support of our donors, sponsors, government, foundation, and institutional partners who made a contribution in 2025. Your incredible generosity and commitment bring our mission and vision to life. Thank you for believing in the power of the arts to spark wonder, curiosity, and understanding of Muslim cultures and to contribute to more inclusive and peaceful societies.

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With Love to Farid Virani - Faraz, Zoya and Faris D.

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