

Aga Khan Museum Strengthens Curatorial Team with Two New Appointments

Marianne Fenton appointed Curator, Contemporary Art, and Dr. Yagnaseni Datta appointed Curator

Toronto, ON – October 6, 2026 – The Aga Khan Museum is pleased to announce the appointments of Marianne Fenton as Curator, Contemporary Art and Dr. Yagnaseni Datta as Curator, both reporting to Dr. Sascha Priewe, Director, Collections & Public Programs.

The appointments mark an important expansion of the Museum's curatorial expertise, bringing together Fenton's experience in contemporary artistic practice and curatorial programming with Datta's specialization in Asian and Islamic art, particularly Mughal and South Asian art. Together, they will contribute to the Museum's ongoing work to connect art and ideas across cultures, histories, and contemporary contexts.

Marianne Fenton Appointed Curator, Contemporary Art

Marianne Fenton has officially transferred to the Collections & Public Programs Department as Curator, Contemporary Art.

An artist and art historian, Fenton joined the Aga Khan Museum in 2017. She holds an MFA from Stellenbosch University in South Africa and an MA in Contemporary Art History from OCAD University in Toronto. Over the past several years, she has become increasingly involved in the Museum's curatorial work, making her appointment a natural evolution of her role and contributions to the institution.

Fenton has curated and contributed to a range of contemporary art exhibitions and projects at the Aga Khan Museum, including *Skate Girls of Kabul* (2017), *Don't Ask Me Where I'm From* (2019), *State of Play* (2021), Ghazaleh Avarzamani's *Terms and Conditions Apply* (2021), *Afghanistan My Love* (2022), *Shezad Dawood: Night in the Garden of Love* (2023–24), *Light: Visionary Perspectives* (2024–2025 co-curated with Bitá Pourvash) and most recently, *Saks Afridi: SpaceMosque* (2026–2027). Through these projects, she has helped advance the Museum's engagement with contemporary artists and practices while exploring questions of identity, place, culture, and society.

In her new role, Fenton will work closely with Dr. Priewe and the curatorial team to lead the conceptualization, development, and delivery of contemporary art projects, commissions, exhibitions, and programming.

"Marianne has already made many important contributions to the Aga Khan Museum through her curatorial work and her engagement with contemporary artists," says Dr. Sascha Priewe, Director, Collections & Public Programs. "Her background as both an artist and art historian gives her a particularly valuable perspective on contemporary practice."

She has demonstrated a strong ability to develop projects that invite audiences into meaningful conversations around art and ideas, and I am delighted to see her take on this new role as Curator, Contemporary Art.”

Dr. Yagnaseni Datta Appointed Curator

The Museum is also pleased to welcome Dr. Yagnaseni Datta as Curator, reporting to Dr. Priewe. Datta joins the Aga Khan Museum from the Worcester Art Museum, where she served as the Sohail and Mona Masood Associate Curator of Asian and Islamic Art. She brings extensive experience in the research, interpretation, and presentation of Asian and Islamic art, with a particular focus on Mughal and South Asian art.

Prior to her role at the Worcester Art Museum, Datta held curatorial and research positions at the Yale University Art Gallery, The Jewish Museum in New York, and the Museu Calouste Gulbenkian in Lisbon. An accomplished scholar, Datta earned her Ph.D. from Yale University, with a focus on Mughal art, as well as an M.A. from the Courtauld Institute of Art, London. She has presented her research at leading international conferences, published in *Orientalism*, and has forthcoming scholarly work with Brill.

Datta has curated numerous exhibitions, including *Im/Perfect Modernisms: Asian Art and Identity since 1945* (2024), *Lee Mingwei: Our Peaceable Kingdom* (2025), and *Beasts of Legend: Animals in East Asian Art*, which will open at the Worcester Art Museum in November 2026. She has also curated the refreshes of the galleries of the Arts of West, South, and Southeast Asia (2024), as well as the Arts of China and Korea (2026).

At the Aga Khan Museum, Datta will contribute to research, interpretation, and presentation of historical Islamic art in dialogue with contemporary global contexts. She will collaborate on permanent collection displays, temporary exhibitions, digital initiatives, acquisitions, and loans, while contributing to public programming and accessible interpretation for diverse audiences. She will also help strengthen scholarly networks and advance the Museum’s public understanding of the arts and cultures of Muslim societies.

“Yagnaseni brings remarkable scholarly depth and a breadth of curatorial experience across Asian and Islamic art,” says Dr. Priewe. “Her expertise in Mughal and South Asian art, combined with her commitment to research, interpretation, and public engagement, will be a tremendous asset to the Museum. Her perspective will help us deepen our engagement with the collection, while creating new opportunities to explore the connections between historical art, contemporary life, and the diverse audiences we serve.”

These appointments reinforce the Museum’s commitment to bringing together scholarship, artistic practice, and public engagement. With complementary areas of expertise, Fenton and Datta will contribute to a curatorial program that places the Museum’s collection and exhibitions in conversation with contemporary artistic practices

and broader global histories, while creating avenues for audiences to encounter new perspectives and connections through art.

About the Aga Khan Museum

[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). Through permanent and temporary exhibitions, educational activities and performing arts, the Museum's mission is to spark wonder, curiosity, and understanding of Muslim cultures and their connection with other cultures through the arts. 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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FOR PRESS INQUIRIES, PLEASE CONTACT:

Eric Tang
Front Street Partners
eric.tang@frontstreetpartners.ca
[416.822.0541](tel:416.822.0541)

Aga Khan Museum
press@agakhanmuseum.org
416.858.8735