



AGA KHAN TRUST FOR CULTURE

## **Aga Khan Museum opens “Seeing Through Babel” exhibition in London**



**London, United Kingdom, 4 July 2019** - The Ismaili Centre, in partnership with the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto, opened “Seeing Through Babel”, a solo exhibition by the Syrian-Armenian artist Kevork Mourad. The exhibition runs in The Ismaili Centre’s Zamana Space from the 1 July 2019 to the 15 August 2019.

The exhibition references the Old Testament story of Babel, when mankind is punished for attempting to construct a tower to heaven. In order to prevent mankind from constructing such towers ever again, God created a multitude of languages.

However, Mr. Mourad suggests that his visual art can “connect people”. Visual language, he says, can “connect people who speak different languages and come from different cultural backgrounds. Where Babel separated, visual art connects.”

Prince Ayn al-Hayat Aga Khan echoed that sentiment when he said: “it is my hope that the Aga Khan Museum will be able to mount interesting temporary exhibitions with the V&A, and the other major British institutions having important places of works of art from, or related to, the Muslim world. Thus reinforcing, which I think is important, the message that culture unites rather than divides.”

Henry S. Kim, the Director and CEO of the Aga Khan Museum, remarked about the international aspirations of the Toronto-based Museum. “We are a Museum that is present here in London, also Dubai, also in the States, also across Canada”, he said “And this is a very important point about what the Museum is all about, because we cannot simply talk about Islamic art just in one city, we need to be able to spread this message across all the cities we can.”

The work, which uses the artist’s trademark techniques – monotypes and drawing onto the surface of the work – is designed to allow visitors to walk in and around it, allowing closer consideration of its themes.

The Ismaili Centre is located at 1 Cromwell Gardens, South Kensington, London.

### **For more information, please contact:**

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## NOTES

***Kevork Mourad*** was born in 1970 in Qamishli, Syria. He grew up and studied in the city of Aleppo before moving to Armenia in 1992 where he obtained his Masters of Fine Arts at the Yerevan Institute of Fine Arts. In 2001 he moved to the United States where he established his practice in New York City. Represented by Galerie Claude Lemand, he has exhibited at Galerie Tanit, Beirut, and the Rose Art Museum, Boston. A painter and video artist, he has performed his animated and live visuals around the world. A member of Yo-Yo Ma's Silk Road Ensemble, he was featured in the documentary *The Music of Strangers*. His animated short film, *Four Arts for Syria*, was funded by the Robert Bosch Stiftung Prize and premiered in the Stuttgart Animation Festival. He has performed at the Brooklyn Museum, Nara Museum in Japan,

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 civilisations 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.

Read online: <https://www.akdn.org/press-release/aga-khan-museum-opens-“seeing-through-babel”-exhibition-london>