

Introduction to his Highness the Aga Khan and the Aga Khan Museum and its collection

His Highness the Aga Khan

- His Highness the Aga Khan is the founder and chairman of the Aga Khan Development Network (AKDN)
- He is the 49th hereditary Imam (spiritual leader) of the Shia Ismaili Muslims
- According to the ethical tradition of Islam that religious leaders have a responsibility to help improve the quality of life in their communities, as well as interpreting the faith, his Highness has been very involved in the work of the AKDN for over 50 years (p. 10).

The Aga Khan Museum

- Is an art institution located in Toronto, Canada and was opened in 2014.
- The museum has both an international scope and mission
- The museum is committed to “build[ing] bridges between cultures by educating about the diverse heritage of Muslim civilizations” through its programming activities which include: its art collection, exhibitions, conferences, performances and community projects. (p. 8). The museum is also committed to preserving and displaying artwork, objects and artifacts that have artistic, cultural and historical significance to places where Muslim societies were and are predominant. These objects represented different historic periods and geographical regions.
- The art and objects in the collection were acquired by His Highness the Aga Khan and his family and date back over a thousand years.
- The objects are made of diverse materials including: “ceramics, metalwork, ivory, stone, wood, textiles, carpets, glass and rock crystals, parchment and painted manuscripts.” (p. 8)
- The objects reflect “the accomplishments of Muslim Civilizations from the Iberian Peninsula to China.” (p.8)
- At any one time, there are approximately 250 items are on permanent display in the galleries

Source:

Kana'an, Ruba, and Patricia Bentley. *Learning at the Aga Khan Museum: A Curriculum Resource Guide for Teachers, Grades One to Eight*. Toronto, Ontario: Aga Khan Museum, 2015. Print.