

ASIAN ART MUSEUM
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for Asian Art & Culture
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Asian

News



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PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

Oct. 24, 2014–Jan. 18, 2015

SAN FRANCISCO, Oct. 8, 2014—The Asian Art Museum presents a range of insightful public programs to accompany the exhibition *Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, on view Oct. 24, 2014 through Jan. 18, 2015. On opening weekend, join us for a traditional Arab music performance by Bay Area music ensemble Aswat. The program features the Aswat women's ensemble and the larger, 40-piece Aswat ensemble in a performance of traditional Saudi songs. On Nov. 1, enjoy new concert works inspired by ancient Arabic texts, by composer Mohammed Fairouz. Later in November, learn about languages from the Arabian Peninsula and listen to poetry with students from the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley. Through the run of the exhibition, the museum will host in-gallery talks, performances, art activities, Family Fun Days and docent-led tours.

An enticing look at the largely unknown ancient past of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, this exhibition draws on recently discovered archaeological material never before seen in the United States. *Roads of Arabia* features objects excavated from several sites throughout the Arabian Peninsula, tracing the impact of ancient trade routes and pilgrimage roads stretching from Yemen in the south to Iraq and Mediterranean cultures in the north. Elegant alabaster bowls and fragile glassware, heavy gold earrings and Hellenistic bronze statues testify to a lively mercantile and cultural interchange among distant civilizations. *Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* is organized by the Arthur M. Sackler Gallery, Smithsonian Institution, in association with the Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

TALKS

The Road to Ubar: Screening and Q&A with Nicholas Clapp

Friday, Oct. 24, 2–3:30 PM
Samsung Hall, free with museum admission

No one thought that Ubar, on the southern coast of Oman and considered the most fabled city of ancient Arabia, would ever be found—if it even existed. Buried in the desert

MORE

without a trace, it had become known as "the Atlantis of the Sands." Many had searched for Ubar, including Lawrence of Arabia. Then, in the 1980s, Nicholas Clapp, a documentary filmmaker and amateur archaeologist, stumbled on the legend of the lost city while poring over historical manuscripts. Filled with curiosity, he led two expeditions to Arabia with a team that included space scientists and geologists. The discovery of Ubar was front-page news across the world and was heralded by *Time* magazine as one of three major scientific events of the 1990s.

Join Nicholas Clapp, sometimes called "the real Indiana Jones," for a fascinating look at his search for Ubar, where archaeologists believe great caravans were assembled for the transport of frankincense across the desert to the Mediterranean Sea.

Contemporary Perspectives: Deconstructing the Veil

Sunday, Nov. 9, 2–3:30 PM

Samsung Hall, free with museum admission

The hijab, chador and burqa are often understood as veils worn by women in Muslim societies, but did you know that covering oneself is a tradition shared among all major Abrahamic religions—Christianity, Judaism and Islam? Suzanne El Gamal moderates a panel discussion investigating the veil as part of larger historic and religious traditions, and as a lens to explore Islamophobia, gender politics and stereotypes. Panelists include women who choose to wear and not wear the veil: Ameena Jandali, Zahra Billoo and Nora Talebi.

Zahra Billoo is the executive director of the San Francisco Bay Area Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR, www.cair.com), whose mission is to protect civil liberties of American Muslims and advocate for justice and mutual understanding.

Suzanne El Gamal is president of San Francisco State University's Pi Alpha Alpha Public Administration Honor Society and president of the board of ZAWAYA (www.zawaya.org), a San Mateo-based Arabic arts organization. Suzanne is passionate about identifying methods for increasing the impact of nonprofit organizations on society.

Ameena Jandali is a founding member of the Islamic Network Group (ING, www.ing.org). She co-designs and develops ING's educational presentations and cultural competency seminars on Islam and related subjects, in colleges, universities, religious centers and other venues.

Nora Talebi is a longtime volunteer speaker with the Islamic Network Group. She is a practicing community pharmacist in the East Bay and has been an ING speaker since 2002.

Travelogue with Michael Wolfe

Saturday, Dec. 13, 1–2:30 PM

Samsung Hall, free with museum admission

Poet, author and filmmaker Michael Wolfe shares personal stories from his journeys to the Arabian Peninsula. A critically acclaimed filmmaker, Wolfe hosted an inside account

of the hajj (pilgrimage) for Ted Koppel's "Nightline" on ABC during Wolfe's pilgrimage to Mecca in 1997.

ASIAALIVE

Languages at a Crossroads

Saturday, Nov. 15 and Sunday, Nov. 16, noon–4 PM
North Court, free with museum admission

The Arabian Peninsula has long been a crossroads of art, culture and trade. Several languages and writing systems have been used, and a rich body of oral poetry has been composed. Learn about these languages and hear poetry with students from the Department of Near Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

This program is co-presented by the Center for Middle Eastern Studies at the University of California, Berkeley.

PERFORMANCES, DEMONSTRATIONS & ACTIVITIES

***Khaliji* Art Alive**

Traditional music performance by Aswat

Saturday, Oct. 25, 1:30–3 PM
Samsung Hall, free with museum admission

Zawaya and the Aswat ensemble invite you to experience the enchanting rhythms and melodies of contemporary *khaliji* music, the rich and mesmerizing musical style of eastern Arabia.

Let Aswat take you on a journey of sensory exploration through songs and instrumental pieces by its three main groups: the Aswat ensemble, the Aswat women's ensemble, and the Aswat *oud* ensemble. Acclaimed *oud* master and veteran Aswat conductor Omar Abbad directs the Bay Area's premier Arab music ensemble in concert.

Performance highlights include instrumental improvisations (*taqaseem*) highlighting traditional and contemporary music from the Arabian Peninsula in soulful renditions by master instrumentalists. The program features a Q&A with Saudi artist Rana Jarbou.

To learn more about Zawaya and Aswat, visit www.zawaya.org.

Interactive Arab Music with Aswat

Sunday, Nov. 16, 1:30–3 PM
Samsung Hall, free with museum admission

Zawaya and Aswat invite you to join us for an interactive music event directed by virtuoso violinist and singer Younes el Makboul. Learn to sing, play Arab percussion instruments and participate in Arab dance circles with the Aswat ensemble.

Performances include a recitation of the Qur'an (*tajweed*) and a performance by the Aswat youth ensemble, captivating your musical senses and visual senses through traditional wardrobe from the Arab world. The program will culminate with a presentation

of sacred songs by the Aswat sacred music ensemble. Lebanese artist Rana Mroue will engage the audience in a Q&A.

To learn more about Zawaya and Aswat, visit www.zawaya.org.

Holiday Art Activity

Tuesdays through Sundays, Nov. 25, 2014–Jan. 4, 2015, noon–4 PM
North Court, free with museum admission

Get inspired by the special exhibition *Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* and the museum collection, and create your own masterpiece. Themes and activities vary by day.

The Artist Sessions presents *Crossroads: Music of Pilgrimage and Transformation*

A mini-festival produced in conjunction with the exhibition *Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*, Crossroads features traditional music of the Arabian Peninsula (performers and composers from Egypt, Syria and Iran) and classical and contemporary concert music inspired by historical voyages of pilgrimage, cultural exchange, exploration and migration.

After the Revels

Saturday, Nov. 1, 2–4 PM
Samsung Hall, \$10 members, \$25 general (includes admission to the museum)

New concert works inspired by ancient Arabic texts, by composer Mohammed Fairouz with pianist Lara Downes, baritone Zachary Gordin, and the Del Sol String Quartet

Arab-American composer Mohammed Fairouz, hailed by BBC World News as “one of the most talented composers of his generation,” integrates West Asian modes into Western structures to expressive effect. This concert introduces the West Coast premieres of several of Fairouz’s solo and chamber works inspired by literary and historical influences reaching back to ancient cultures of the Arabian Peninsula.

A Dream on a Train to Marrakesh

Dec. 14, 2–4 PM
Samsung Hall, \$10 members, \$25 general (includes admission to the museum)

World fusion music of the Arabian Peninsula, with a modern twist with Ancient Future, featuring Georges Lammam and the Musical Art Quintet

The music of Ancient Future and the Musical Art Quintet blends the rhythms and harmonies of the Arabian Peninsula with contemporary jazz and rock, producing an irresistible and exhilarating sound fusion that captures the essence of pilgrimage, cultural exchange, exploration and migration. These multifaceted

artists create an innovative musical experience that guides listeners on a hypnotic voyage through time and place.

FAMILY PROGRAMS

Family Fun Day

First and third Sundays, Nov. 2 and 16, 10:30 AM–2 PM (10:30–11 AM stART tour for kids ages 3–6; 11 AM–2 PM art making and self-guided activities)
North Court, free with museum admission

Explore art and ideas through immersive storytelling, fun gallery activities, creative art making and more during Family Fun Day. Themes and projects change regularly. November through January, take a trip along the incense roads of the Arabian Peninsula with a gallery guide or Art Cards that promote closer looking at objects, and discover how ancient civilizations depicted the human form with projects inspired by the special exhibition *Roads of Arabia*.

Stories! The Wicked, the Wily, the Wise

Sundays, 1–1:45 PM (suggested for ages 7 and up); first Sundays stART tour 10:30–11 AM are part of Family Fun Days (ages 3–6) and 3–3:45 PM (ages 7 and up)
Meet near the information desk, free with museum admission (kids 12 and younger always get in free)

Want to hear stories about heroic girls and boys, animal legends and tales about dynamic deities? Join a storytelling tour and listen to myths and tales from Asia. While family friendly, these stories are not just for kids!

Explorer Packs

Daily

Pick one up at the information desk, free with museum admission

Learn more about the elements of art while searching the Asian Art Museum collection with an Elements of Art Explorer Pack. Designed for kids 5 and older, the packs use props and playthings to introduce line, shape, color and texture to young visitors. You can pick up Elements of Art Explorer Packs at the information desk in South Court.

TEACHER WORKSHOPS

Roads of Arabia: Incense Routes

Saturday, Oct. 25, 9:30 AM–12:30 PM

Education Studio, \$10, [pre-registration required at http://education.asianart.org/](http://education.asianart.org/)

Imagine life along the ancient incense trade routes through storytelling and inquiry-based tours and art experiences. Workshop includes curriculum resources as well as a

continental breakfast. Teachers are invited to join the 1 PM performance by music ensemble Zawaya (optional).

Roads of Arabia: Teaching About Islam

Saturday, Nov. 22, 9:30 AM–12:30 PM

Education Studio, \$10, [pre-registration required at http://education.asianart.org/](http://education.asianart.org/)

Imagine life on the hajj (pilgrimage) through storytelling and inquiry-based tours, and a special presentation by filmmaker Michael Wolfe, who shares his personal experiences on the hajj and tools for building global understanding of Islam through his organization 20,000 Dialogues. Workshop includes a tour, curriculum resources and a continental breakfast.

SCHOOL PROGRAM

School Tours: *Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia*

Tuesdays–Thursdays, Oct. 29, 2014–Jan. 14, 2015, 10:30 AM–noon

Museum-wide, free

Introduce your students to the ancient trade networks of the Arabian Peninsula and the expansion of the Islamic world. The exhibition *Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* features objects recently excavated from several sites throughout the peninsula, stretching from Yemen in the south to Iraq and Mediterranean cultures in the north. Through a guided tour, storytelling and an art activity, students will experience the art, history and legacy of this region.

SPECIAL EXHIBITION DOCENT-LED TOURS

Tuesdays–Sundays at 10:30 AM and 2 PM. Approximately 45 minutes.

Noon and 3 PM (45 minutes each)

Meet near the information desk

Free with museum admission

Kids' Tours

Saturdays and Sundays, Oct. 25, 2014–Jan. 18, 2015

2:30 PM (30 minutes)

Meet near the information desk; suggested for families with children ages 7–10

Free with museum admission (kids 12 and younger always get in free)

Kids' Tours provide children and parents the tools and vocabulary to look at and talk about art. Explore the special exhibition *Roads of Arabia: Archaeology and History of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia* with a docent on a search for artwork with amazing animals, creepy creatures and beautiful beings.

ABOUT THE ASIAN ART MUSEUM

The Asian Art Museum–Chong-Moon Lee Center for Asian Art and Culture is one of San Francisco's premier arts institutions and home to a world-renowned collection of more than

18,000 Asian art treasures spanning 6,000 years of history. Through rich art experiences, centered on historic and contemporary artworks, the Asian Art Museum unlocks the past for visitors, bringing it to life while serving as a catalyst for new art, new creativity and new thinking.

Information: 415.581.3500 or www.asianart.org

Location: 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco, CA 94102

Hours: The museum is open Tuesdays through Sundays from 10 AM to 5 PM, with extended spring and summer evening hours on Thursdays until 9 PM. Closed Mondays, as well as New Year's Day, Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day.

General Admission: FREE for museum members, \$15 for adults, \$10 for seniors (65+), college students with ID, and youths (13–17). FREE for children under 12 and SFUSD students with ID. General admission on Thursdays after 5 PM is \$5 for all visitors (except those under 12, SFUSD students, and museum members, who are always admitted FREE). General admission is FREE to all on Target First Free Sundays (the first Sunday of every month). A surcharge may apply for admission to special exhibitions.

Access: The Asian Art Museum is wheelchair accessible. For more information regarding access: 415.581.3598; TDD: 415.861.2035.