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PRESS RELEASE

Staatliche Museen zu Berlin

Directorate General, Stauffenbergstr. 41, 10785 Berlin

Museum für Islamische Kunst launches online portal "Islamic Art"

Berlin's Museum für Islamische Kunst (Museum of Islamic Art) has published its online portal islamic-art.smb.museum today. It is the first digital platform in the German-speaking world that presents Islamic cultures in a technically sound, innovative and entertaining manner. "Islamic Art" is now available free of charge in German, English and Arabic.

"There is currently no digital platform in Germany that provides information about Islamic cultures in this way," says **Stefan Weber**, Director of the Museums für Islamische Kunst. "In addition, there is a great need for information from educators from a wide variety of learning locations such as day-care centers, schools and universities with regard to topics of Islam. Here, too, the portal can support a differentiated opinion-forming process about the art and culture of Islamic regions. We would like to thank our partners at Alwaleed Philanthropies Global, with whose generous support we were able to realise this project in the first place."

islamic-art.smb.museum works with four modules **Stories**, **360° tours**, **Media Library** and **Digital Learning**.

Stories lead through the thematic worlds of the collection of the Museum für Islamische Kunst, provide multimedia access to the objects and provide exciting insights into the work in the museum. Through cross-collection links, the stories invite you to explore related objects, themes and stories. They show that art and cultural history can only be conceived and narrated in the context of diversity, change, migration, exchange and mobility. Users decide themselves according to individual interest which path they follow and can thus influence the experience themselves. At the start of the platform, the three special exhibitions *Gurbet Şarkıları. Songs from a Foreign Land. Music and Relationship between Turkey and Germany (1961-2021)*, *Samarra Revisited. Excavation Photographs from the Caliph's Palaces Revisited* and *In:complete. Destroyed – Divided – Supplemented* are launched; more stories are continuously being published.

360° tours make themes of the museum in generic rooms virtually tangible. Users get an exploratory access to the objects of the collection. A first highlight is the music tour, which consists of different formats. For example, the "Mshatta Lounge" will be presented, a concert series that was presented live in the Mshatta Hall in 2019.

The participating musicians have each selected an object from the exhibition and interpreted it in their musical language. For example, the 360°

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GENERALDIREKTION
PRESS – COMMUNICATION – SPONSORSHIP

Stauffenbergstraße 41
10785 Berlin

MECHTILD KRONENBERG
HEAD OF DIVISION

MARKUS FARR
PRESS OFFICER

Phone: +49 30 266 42 3402
Mobile: +49 151 527 53 886

presse@smb.spk-berlin.de
www.smb.museum/presse



tour features the appearance of musician Elshan Ghasimi, who presents specially composed pieces for three ceramics in the collection, while artist Zsanett Szirmay sets samples of the carpet collection of the Museum für Islamische Kunst to music. A 360° tour on the theme of garden paradises and insights into the transformation of the permanent exhibition of the museum will follow later this year.

Through the **media library**, users gain access to films, music videos, images, audio files and e-publications that give insights into the museum's history and the restoration of objects as well as inform about the history and cultural heritage of Islamic cultural spaces.

The area of **digital learning** brings Islamic art and cultural history directly into the classroom. The materials from the project "Common Past – Common Future II" funded by the Bundesbeauftragten für Kultur und Medien (Federal Commissioner for Culture and the Media) are based on the curricula and can thus be used in the regular school lessons of many subjects (including art, music, ethics/religion, politics) and class levels. In the "Background Information" section, educators and educational media editors will find lecture videos, handouts and checklists with specialist expertise, for example on dealing with pictorial representations in Islamic contexts. In addition, materials from the educational project "TAMAM" are provided. In this project mosques developed together with the Museum für Islamische Kunst materials for extracurricular education and youth work from 2015 to 2018.

As the oldest museum of Islamic art outside Islamic regions, the **Museum für Islamische Kunst** houses about 100,000 historical objects. They originate from the Mediterranean (Southern Europe, North Africa, Western Asia) as well as Central and South Asia and were created between the 7th and 19th century. In addition to the exhibition work in the Pergamonmuseum, the collection is particularly involved in the fields of international cooperation in foreign cultural policy, political and social education on the subject of Islam in Germany, as well as cultural heritage and migration to and from the countries of origin of the collection. With the unique selling point as the only German-language reference museum on art and cultural history in the Islamic world, the museum is taking new paths to make the contents of the collection digitally accessible to various social groups in their breadth and depth.

For four decades, **Alwaleed Philanthropies Global** has supported and spent more than 4.4 billion dollars on social welfare and initiated more than 1,000 projects in over 189 countries, managed by 10 Saudi female members, reaching more than 1 billion beneficiaries around the world, regardless of gender, race, or religion. Alwaleed Philanthropies collaborates with a range of philanthropic, governmental, and nongovernmental organizations to combat poverty, empower women and youth, develop communities, provide disaster relief, and create cultural understanding through education. It has sponsored academic centres at top universities in the United States, the Middle East and Europe, and supported the Louvre in Paris.

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