



THE KHALILI FAMILY TRUST

TREASURES FROM THE NASSER D KHALILI COLLECTION OF ISLAMIC ART TO GO ON VIEW IN ABU DHABI

TDIC Brings Khalili Treasures to the Middle East for the first time

Exhibition under the Patronage of HH Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed

The Khalili Family Trust is delighted to announce that a selection of works from the Khalili Collection of Islamic Art will go on view to the public for the first time in the Middle East at the **Emirates Palace Hotel, Abu Dhabi**, from **23 January to end April 2008**. The Patron of the exhibition is His Highness Sheikh Mohammed Bin Zayed Al Nahyan, Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and Deputy Supreme Commander of the UAE Armed Forces.

The Arts of Islam: Treasures from the Nasser D Khalili Collection will comprise over 500 pieces and include a number of works that have never been exhibited before, such as an exquisitely detailed panoramic watercolour of Mecca, painted in 1843, which is the earliest known visual record of the Holy City.

The exhibition is being presented by the Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC), the asset development arm of the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA). HE Sheikh Sultan Bin Tahnoon Al Nahyan, Chairman of ADTA and TDIC, said “This is an exhibition of international acclaim and its staging is in line with our ambition of establishing the UAE capital as a global cultural hub. The staging of this exhibition, and others to follow in the months and years to come, will assist in raising regional awareness of the fine arts and nurturing a cultural psyche which will culminate in the creation in Abu Dhabi of the world’s largest cluster of cultural assets.”

Abu Dhabi is on its way to becoming a global cultural destination with the creation of the Cultural District on Saadiyat Island, which will be home to the Sheikh Zayed National Museum, the Guggenheim Abu Dhabi contemporary arts museum, the Louvre Abu Dhabi universal museum, a maritime museum, performing arts centre and cluster of arts pavilions. Mubarak Al Muhairi, Director General, ADTA and Managing Director, TDIC, said “This exhibition will attract an audience, not just from within the UAE, but from throughout the region and beyond”.

The exhibition will present both the religious and secular arts of Islam, through a series of themes. These will include: the development of the arts associated with manuscripts of the Holy Qur’an, especially calligraphy; arts associated with pilgrimage; everyday and treasury objects; miniature painting; and carpets and textiles. Other groups of objects will focus on the talismanic use of verses of the Holy Qur’an; science in the service of religion; horsemanship; falconry; and interaction with Europe, among others.

A fully illustrated catalogue, published in Arabic and English, will accompany the exhibition and a symposium, a series of lectures and other educational programmes are also planned.

The Nasser D Khalili Collection of Islamic art comprises some 20,000 works and is the largest and most comprehensive in the world, encompassing the entire history of Islamic art from its beginnings in the 7th century until the present day. The entire Collection is being published under the auspices of the Khalili Family Trust and will comprise 31 volumes in total, 17 of which are already available. Professor Nasser D Khalili, an eminent scholar, is passionate about art and collecting. One of his reasons for assembling the Khalili Collection is to promote a greater understanding between people of different cultures and faiths and to increase awareness of the rich contributions of Islamic cultures to world art. He believes that 'religion and politics have their own languages, but the language of art is universal'. All Khalili's cultural and educational endeavours, as a patron, writer and lecturer, stem from this conviction.

Professor Khalili said: "It is highly appropriate that the first Middle East showing of works from the Islamic collection should be in Abu Dhabi which is now internationally recognised as a strong proponent of the arts. The staging of the exhibition owes much to the personal support of His Excellency Sheikh Sultan and the sponsorship of TDIC, both of which are warmly appreciated".

Notes to Editors

Tourism Development & Investment Company (TDIC) is a public joint stock company established under Law No: 12 of 2005 as decreed by the Abu Dhabi Ruler and UAE President, His Highness Sheikh Khalifa Bin Zayed Al Nahyan. TDIC is an independent organisation empowered to manage the tourism investment zones of the Abu Dhabi Tourism Authority (ADTA), which directs and implements strategy for the expansion of the emirate's tourism sector. TDIC will develop the real estate assets that support ADTA's mission of assisting UAE economic diversification through tourism development.

TDIC, launched with an initial paid-up capital of AED100 million (US \$27.5 million) with its shareholding fully owned by ADTA, operates along strictly commercial lines with its projects being self-sustaining and economically feasible. Its activities include creating development and tourism related concepts for specific sites and locations, disposing of, or repositioning, government-owned tourism related assets, entering into joint ventures with investment partners for assets such as hotels or residential products, as well as serving as the master developer for large-scale projects.

Admission to the exhibition will be free but visitors are invited to make a nominal contribution which will go to support the Arts Programme of the Emirates Foundation. The Emirates Foundation is committed to improving the quality of life for all people in the UAE. Through a variety of projects that stimulate intellectual and social growth, it aims to increase access to cultural, educational and technological resources, and foster increased participation in civic life.

Opening hours: 10am to 10pm.

For further information and images, please contact:

Sue Bond Public Relations

Hollow Lane Farmhouse, Thurston, Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk IP31 3RQ, UK
Tel. +44 (0)1359 271085, Fax. +44 (0)1359 271934
E-mail. info@suebond.co.uk, Website www.suebond.co.uk