

DALLAS MUSEUM OF ART APPOINTS SABIHA AL KHEMIR AS FIRST SENIOR ADVISOR FOR ISLAMIC ART

DALLAS, TX – November 1, 2012 – Maxwell L. Anderson, The Eugene McDermott Director of the Dallas Museum of Art, today announced the appointment of Sabiha Al Khemir, the founding director of the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar, as the Museum's first Senior Advisor of Islamic Art. The appointment, effective immediately, is for a three-year term during which Dr. Al Khemir will support Anderson and senior staff in building partnerships with art institutions across the globe. Al Khemir, an internationally known authority on Islamic art from the 7th century through the present, will work with the DMA to enhance the presence of Islamic art within its exhibitions and collections and promote the exchange of Islamic works between the Museum and other participating institutions.

“Sabiha is widely acknowledged as one of the world's leading experts in Islamic art, having worked with the Met, the Louvre, and the British Museum, in addition to serving as the founding director of the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha,” said Anderson. “With her appointment, the DMA embarks on a new emphasis in our collections and exhibitions strategy. Through the improved presentation of Islamic art treasures in Dallas, we will broaden and enrich the experiences we offer visitors and add to our strengths in contemporary, 19th-century, African, and Indonesian art.”

Al Khemir's appointment signals the DMA's expanded focus on developing new collaborations between the Museum and institutions internationally, encouraging cultural dialogue and exchange and cultivating broader awareness of cultural heritage from around the globe. To support this goal, Al Khemir will travel worldwide to further the Museum's connections with the great collections of Islamic art. In the near-term, the arts of Indonesia and the Philippines will be of particular focus, to complement and enhance the DMA's collection strength in this area.

“I am inspired and excited to be joining the staff at the Dallas Museum of Art and to be a part of the DMA's expanding international presence. By connecting with people and cultures in new ways, we are able to experience different perspectives, broaden horizons, and better mutual understanding. This work allows for the development of new types of visual presentation,” said Al Khemir. “The visionary leadership at the DMA makes this possible and the scale of the potential is unlimited.”

A writer, artist, and expert in Islamic art whose work is concerned with bridging cultural divides and spurring international dialogue, Al Khemir joined the Museum of Islamic Art in Doha, Qatar, as its Chief Curator in 2003. She later served as its first director from 2006 to 2008. She was the project director and catalogue author for the current exhibition *Beauty and Belief, Crossing Bridges with the Arts of Islamic Culture*, the largest traveling survey of Islamic art ever assembled in the United States. She also curated and wrote the catalogue (in French, Arabic, and English) for the Louvre exhibition *From Córdoba to Samarkand, Masterpieces from the Museum of Islamic Art, Doha (2006)*, the first museum presentation of some of the pieces that would become the core of the museum's permanent collection.

Al Khemir has taught courses in Islamic art at the British Museum and has consulted for the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in the same field. She lectures worldwide on Islamic

art and various cultural topics. She has produced television documentaries broadcast on Channel 4, U.K., published two novels, and illustrated books, including a book jacket for Nobel Prize-winning author Naguib Mahfouz. In 2008 she was honored in Washington, D.C., by the President's Committee on Arts and Humanities.

A native of Tunis, she received her B.A. in English literature from the University of Tunis and M.A. and Ph.D. degrees in Islamic art and archaeology from London University. She lives in New York and will travel to Dallas at regular intervals as part of her appointment.

This appointment has been made possible through the generous support of Kay and Elliot Cattarulla. Mrs. Cattarulla is the founder of the Museum's award-winning literary series Arts & Letters Live and served as its producer for the first twelve seasons. Mr. Cattarulla is a former DMA trustee.

About the Dallas Museum of Art

Established in 1903, the Dallas Museum of Art (DMA) ranks among the leading art institutions in the country and is distinguished by its innovative exhibitions and groundbreaking educational programs. At the heart of the Museum and its programs is its global collection, which encompasses more than 24,000 works and spans 5,000 years of history, representing a full range of world cultures. Located in the vibrant Arts District of downtown Dallas, the Museum welcomes more than half a million visitors annually and acts as a catalyst for community creativity, engaging people of all ages and backgrounds with a diverse spectrum of programming, from exhibitions and lectures to concerts, literary events, and dramatic and dance presentations.

The Dallas Museum of Art is supported in part by the generosity of Museum members and donors, the citizens of Dallas through the City of Dallas Office of Cultural Affairs, and the Texas Commission on the Arts.