



## **Ministry of Culture and APEAL Sign Loan Agreement of the Lebanese Ministry of Culture's Artwork Collection**

**Beirut - 28 October, 2016**

During a press conference held at the National Museum of Beirut, the Ministry of Culture and the Association for the Promotion and Exhibition of the Arts in Lebanon (APEAL) signed a loan agreement of the ministry's artwork collection. The conference was attended by his Excellency the Minister of Culture, Mr. Raymond Arajji, Vice President of APEAL, Mrs. Sandra Abou Nader, along with the association's board members, representatives of the German Embassy in Lebanon and an array of public figures.

The loan agreement transcends both the ministry's efforts to promote an exchange of expertise within the active and specialized cultural networks and with APEAL's launched project Beirut Museum of Art- BeMA. Serving as a cultural platform that sheds the light on contemporary and modern art in Lebanon and the region, the museum will embrace a collection of fine arts and will act as a platform for reconciliation fostering dialogue and an exchange of cultures and civilizations.

The bilateral agreement includes an art collection encompassing a selection of masterpieces by Lebanese artists preserved by the Ministry of Culture for several years. The collection was distributed across the Presidential Palace, The Grand Serail, the Summer Presidential Residence in Beiteddine, the UNESCO Palace and the ministry's offices. Prior to their public unveiling which will be marked by the official opening of the Beirut Museum of Art-BeMA, the artworks comprising of paintings on canvas, works on paper, sculptures and photographs will be cleaned and restored with the support of the German Embassy who will fund the restoration works equipment.

### **About Nader**

"Our gathering today is that of a symbolic significance, as our National Museum is the platform witnessing the agreement between the Ministry of Culture and APEAL, the Association for the Promotion and Exhibition of the Arts in Lebanon. We are sure that this is not an ephemeral event, but another milestone to build a better cultural and artistic life for Beirut and Lebanon," said APEAL Vice President, Mrs. Abou Nader.



“In the collective mind of the Lebanese people, the Museum area stood out for many years as a demarcation line separating two halves of a city torn apart by war. This same area, however, returned to life armed with the strength of history, science, culture and art, as it brought together: the National Museum itself, Mim Museum, Beit Beirut, and soon, at the intersection one street away from this location, on a plot owned by Saint-Joseph University, APEAL will build Beirut Museum of Art (BeMA) which will play a focal role in contributing to culture and art through its design and mission, serving as a platform for reconciliation and witnessing a cultural revival through its symbolic location,” she added.

“APEAL has always been a pioneer in strongly believing in Lebanese artists’ creativity, as it proudly did and still cooperates with the Ministry of Culture to promote Lebanese art and artists in cultural and artistic forums, such as the Venice Biennale, among others. In addition, we endeavor to transform the Beirut Museum of Art into a new central hub that will be added to the Lebanese and Middle-Eastern cultural map. The agreement of usage of the Lebanese artistic works collection affiliated to the Ministry of Culture in Lebanon, proves that the Beirut Museum of Art is taking shape in rapid and steady steps... for this edifice to be a bridge linking diverse cultures, preserving Lebanon and the Middle East’s common heritage, and participating in the promotion of prestigious modern and contemporary works of art,” Highlighted Mrs. Abou Nader, stating that “This artistic collection forms an integral part of our modern cultural and artistic heritage, in line with our history, the reason why we consider it is our very duty to maintain and promote it.”

APEAL’s Vice president affirmed the association’s pledge “to reconstruct this artistic collection, which a specialized international committee of experts will assess, in order for it to be later exposed at the Beirut Museum of Art”, expressing both APEAL and BeMA’s gratitude to Minister Arajji, “for trusting us and believing in our vision of a project that will enhance Lebanon’s standing as a centerpoint of culture on the international cultural scene.”

Concluding her speech, Mrs. Abou Nader thanked BAKS Consultants, the German Embassy, Mr. Saleh Barakat, APEAL and the Ministry of Culture teams for their efforts.

## **Arajji**

In turn, the Minister of Culture, Mr. Raymond Arajji, said that the loan agreement between APEAL and the Ministry is a constructive cultural initiative enriching the path of Lebanon’s fine arts, that highly contributes to better promoting and spreading the creativity of Lebanese artists”.



Araji added that “APEAL’s project of a new museum for fine arts is in complete harmony with the mission and the objectives of the Ministry of Culture in shedding the light on local artists’ creative works, to act as a meeting platform of interaction and exchange between creators and the Lebanese public”.

“We are confident”, concluded the minister who greeted the Lebanese artists, “that this loan agreement signed with APEAL’s museum in the making will add value to its art collections and will help the institution reach its objectives”.

The press conference was then followed by the official signature of the agreement by the Minister of Culture, Mr. Raymond Araji and APEAL’s Vice President, Mrs. Sandra Abou Nader. A cocktail ceremony was held for the occasion.

## **ABOUT THE ASSOCIATION FOR THE PROMOTION AND EXHIBITION OF THE ARTS IN LEBANON (APEAL)**

The Association for the Promotion and Exhibition of the Arts in Lebanon (APEAL) is a non-profit organization dedicated to showcasing and encouraging Lebanese artists by projecting their artwork beyond conventional borders and onto a larger screen. One of APEAL's goals is to create a common platform and magnet for creativity by presenting eclectic collections gathered from a universe of gifted visual, literary or performing artists. APEAL strives to be a point of connection in vital cultural conversations between civilizations.

Composed of Lebanese and international members from around the world, APEAL envisions launching exchange programs between artists from the Lebanese scene and counterparts elsewhere, from universities and art academies. It is dedicated to granting scholarships to promising talent, and contributing to the formation of trained curators and professionals to help put them on a par with their peers the world over. By creating this window, APEAL is helping nurture the seeds of Lebanon's artistic potential and preserving its cultural fabric in a vibrant, forward-looking post-conflict society.

<http://www.apeal-lb.org>