

# Lebanese-born Architect Chosen for Beirut Museum of Art

By **Robin Pogrebin**

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The Lebanese-born architect Amale Andraos of WORKac will design the BeMA: Beirut Museum of Art, the museum announced on Tuesday. Ms. Andraos, the dean of Columbia University's Graduate School of Architecture, Planning and Preservation, founded the Manhattan-based WORKac with her husband, Dan Wood, in 2003.

"It's quite personal," Ms. Andraos, who left Beirut at age 3, said in a telephone interview.

BeMA — on a site owned by Université Saint-Joseph that once marked the Green Line that separated predominantly Muslim areas from predominantly Christian ones in the Lebanese civil war — will feature a permanent collection of modern and contemporary artworks from Lebanon, the Lebanese diaspora and the region.

The design wraps the building's facade in a six-story promenade — an allusion to the Mediterranean balcony — turning the museum's walls into indoor-outdoor spaces for art. This vertical envelope will include galleries, community rooms and urban gardens that invite in the surrounding community.

"It's really intended to be part of the campus and part of the city," Ms. Andraos said, "to break down the sense that art is elitist and closed and instead become a place where there can be discussion and conversation."

The museum, which is to open in 2023, was spearheaded by the Association for the Promotion and Exhibition of the Arts in Lebanon, a nonprofit. A museum director has yet to be selected.

WORKac's projects have included the Edible Schoolyard at P.S. 216 in Brooklyn, the Kew Gardens Hills Library in Queens and a farm at MoMA PS1.

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