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V&A ANNOUNCES RACHID KORAÏCHI AS WINNER OF THE JAMEEL PRIZE 2011

Algerian born Rachid Koraïchi has won the £25,000 Jameel Prize for a selection of embroidered cloth banners from a series entitled *Les Maîtres invisibles* (The Invisible Masters), 2008. Martin Roth, Director of the V&A, Hasan Jameel and Ed Vaizey MP, presented Rachid Koraïchi with the prize at a ceremony at the V&A on Monday 12 September.

The Judges felt that Rachid's work matches the aims of the Jameel Prize through its qualities of design and reliance on traditional craft. They particularly admired how he has made his great spiritual and intellectual lineage accessible to all through the graphic language he has created out of his artistic heritage.

Koraichi uses Arabic calligraphy, and symbols and ciphers from a range of other languages and cultures to explore the lives and legacies of the 14 great mystics of Islam. The work aims to show that the world of Islam, in contrast to contemporary perceptions of crisis and violence, has another side entirely, evident in the tolerant and sophisticated writings of great Muslim thinkers and poets such as Rumi and El Arabi. These 'masters', whose fame has spread even to the West, left an imprint on successive generations and their message is just as relevant today as when first written down.

Awarded every two years, the Jameel Prize is an international art prize for contemporary artists and designers inspired by Islamic traditions of craft and design. The Prize aims to raise awareness of the thriving interaction between contemporary practice and the rich artistic heritage of Islam, and to contribute to a broader debate about Islamic culture. Launched in 2009, the winner of the first Jameel Prize was Afruz Amighi for her work *1001 Pages* (2008), an intricate hand-cut screen made from the woven plastic used to construct refugee tents. Afruz is on the judging panel for the 2011 Prize.

An exhibition of work by the winner and nine other short-listed artists and designers runs until 25 September. The exhibition will then embark on an international tour

travelling to venues across the United States and Europe including the Institut du Monde Arabe, Paris in winter 2011/12; the Casa Árabe, Madrid in spring/summer 2012; the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston in autumn 2012; and Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University in winter 2012/13.

The Jameel Prize 2009 exhibition visited six venues across the Middle East and was seen by a total of 49,161 visitors. The Jameel Prize 2009 was the first V&A exhibition to visit Saudi Arabia, Lebanon, the UAE and Morocco.

Professor Martin Roth, chair of the judging panel and Director of the V&A, *says “Rachid’s work stood out because his banners have a universal appeal. They work in the white space of a contemporary art gallery, but they also hold their own in historical settings – from Parisian palaces to simple Sufi shrines.”*

The winner was decided by a panel of judges chaired by Professor Martin Roth, Director of the V&A. The judges were: Wassan Al-Khudhairi, Director, Mathaf: Arab Museum of Modern Art, Qatar; Navid Akhtar, Executive Director, Gazelle Media; Afruz Amighi, artist; and Dina Bakhoum, Conservation Programme Manager, The Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Egypt

The nine other short-listed artists and designers are **Noor Ali Chagani, Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian, Bita Ghezelayagh, Babak Golkar, Hayv Kahraman, Aisha Khalid, Hazem El Mestikawy, Hadieh Shafie and Soody Sharifi.**

The Jameel Prize is conducted in partnership with Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives (ALJCI). The prize was conceived after the redesign and redisplay of the V&A’s Jameel Gallery of Islamic Art, which opened in July 2006. The gallery is an outstanding presentation of the rich artistic heritage of the Islamic world, and the prize aims to raise awareness of the thriving interaction between contemporary practice and this great historical heritage. It has also contributed to a broader understanding of Islamic culture and its place in the world.

The 2011 Jameel Prize exhibition is curated by Tim Stanley, senior curator of the V&A’s Middle Eastern collection, with Salma Tuqan, V&A’s Middle East curator of contemporary art.

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON RACHID KORAÏCHI

Rachid Koraïchi (b. 1947, Ain Beida, Algeria) lives and works between Tunisia and France. He studied at the Institute of Fine Arts in Algeria before moving to Paris in 1971, where he continued his studies at a variety of institutions including the National School of

Decorative Arts. He has exhibited in many international group exhibitions including *Isla* (Islam), Centro Cultural Banco do Brasil, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (2010); *The Future of Tradition - The Tradition of Future*, Haus der Kunst, Munich (2010); *Short Century* (Munich, Berlin, Chicago and New York, 2001-02); the 47th and 49th Venice Biennale (1997 and 2001); and *Word into Art*, British Museum, London (2006). His work is included in major public collections worldwide including the British Museum, London; the National Museum for African Art, Washington DC and the Museum of Islamic Arts, Doha. Although his aesthetics are deeply rooted in his multicultural Algerian heritage, Rachid Koraïchi has a global outlook. The starting point for his work is calligraphy but his practice extends to ceramics, textiles and metalwork.

About Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives (ALJCI)

Abdul Latif Jameel Community Initiatives (ALJCI) is committed to furthering and promoting opportunities for thousands of young Saudi men and women each year through its job creation initiative called BAB Rizq Jameel (BRJ). BRJ has created more than 45,010 jobs in 2010 and has created more than 175,101 jobs since inception in 2003. The Jameel Prize tour is one of its increasing numbers of international initiatives in the Middle East and North Africa. More information is available at www.aljci.org.

Images

Images of the winner's work and portraits of the winner are available to download free of charge from: <http://pressimages.vam.ac.uk>

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Images of the winner in front of their work in the Jameel Prize exhibition will be available from Tuesday 13 September.

For further PRESS information please contact Cathy Sutton in the V&A press office on 0207 942 2500/2502 or email press.office@vam.ac.uk (Not for publication)

