

November 1, 2016



## AGGV welcomes Syrian refugees through family art program

Art brings people together and helps create community. That's one of the reasons the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria felt strongly about ensuring recent Syrian refugees were able to visit the AGGV for their Family Sunday program.

AGGV passes for Family Sundays are available through the Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria to the community of Syrian refugees who have arrived both through government and private sponsorship. Passes are printed in both Arabic and English and may be used to attend the AGGV for other programming as well as admission to exhibitions. Admission fees for accompanying volunteers or friends providing interpretative service will be waived.

"The Inter-Cultural Association (ICA) of Greater Victoria is proud to support the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria with this initiative. In addition to making the arts accessible to all members of our community, our hope is that newcomers are supported in their resettlement through increased opportunity to participate in family-focused events that showcase the artistic expression of Victoria residents. ICA is grateful to the AGGV for providing these opportunities to Syrian refugees and we look forward to partnering on similar initiatives in the future." Jean McRae, Chief Executive Officer, Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria

"Like all Canadians the Gallery is pleased to be able to welcome newcomers to our home. This program will give them an opportunity to learn more about our diverse culture and equally important it gives us an opportunity to meet and learn from them. We are thankful for the special funding we have received from the Canada Council for the Arts, which allows us to offer this exciting program," says AGGV Director Jon Tupper.

Family Sunday is an extremely popular monthly program at the AGGV. Included with the cost of admission, the exhibition-themed workshops include a tour through the exhibition and activities combining conversation and hands-on art-making. Past Family Sundays have included an exploration of Meiji Japan and print-making, watercolour and abstraction, First Nations themes and gatherings.

"What I love about the program is that it not only brings together families, but it does so in an environment that facilitates the critical role of art in a child's life," added Tupper.

Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada estimates that 290 Syrian refugees are destined to settle in the Greater Victoria area. Through contact with the Inter-cultural Association of Greater Victoria, it is estimated that an additional 100 have been privately sponsored.

For more information, calendar of events and tickets, visit [www.aggv.ca](http://www.aggv.ca) or call 250-384-4171.

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**Art Gallery of Greater Victoria**  
1040 Moss Street  
Victoria, British Columbia V8V 4P1  
250.384.4171 [aggv.ca](http://aggv.ca)

*See [aggv.ca](http://aggv.ca) for details*

**Media Contact:**  
Sandra Hudson  
tel. 250-216-1380  
[media@aggv.ca](mailto:media@aggv.ca)



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