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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**BeMA: BEIRUT MUSEUM OF ART REVEALS OFFICIAL NAME**

**PRE-LAUNCH PROGRAMMING IS UNDERWAY FOR LEBANON'S NEW MODERN AND CONTEMPORARY ART MUSEUM, SET TO OPEN IN 2020**

**(Beirut/New York)** – The name of Lebanon’s newest art institution has just been revealed. The formation of **BeMA: Beirut Museum of Art** is spearheaded by The **Association for the Promotion and Exhibition of the Arts in Lebanon (APEAL)**, a non-profit organization dedicated to international quality programs that support art from Lebanon and the global art scene. An international architecture competition for the museum’s new building is currently underway, with the winning design to be selected by an independent jury in Fall 2016.

One of the most significant developments for Lebanese art and culture in a generation, BeMA is envisioned as a multidisciplinary hub of art and design dedicated to showcasing modern and contemporary Lebanese culture. Set to open in 2020, its collections and program are being developed with the aim of bringing together diverse populations and narratives from the region and beyond. Recognizing the many diverse communities that comprise its audiences, BeMA translates into French as Beyrouth Musée de l'Art – and into Arabic as بيروت متحف الفن – بما. The museum’s Arabic abbreviation "بما" appropriately signifies "including", underscoring a key element of the museum’s mission to be an inclusive place of dialogue. The name firmly situates the institution’s grounding in Beirut, without limiting its collection to any single nation, region or time period.

In the lead up to opening its doors, BeMA is already engaging audiences through a series of evolving programs. This March it launched an artist-in-residence program in Ras Masqa, Lebanon, with the contribution of Temporary.Art.Platform (T.A.P.). Through this first #RMAR residency, six artists – Ali El-Darsa, Youmna Geday, Raymond Gemayel, Ieva Saudargaitė, Petra Serhal and Myriam Boulos – were invited to develop research based, site-specific and participatory projects. Designed to build bridges between the informal educational formats of artistic practice and the academic structures of universities, the artist-in-residence program coincided with a series of panels, lectures, and film screenings and was created in collaboration with BeMA and T.A.P., the Municipality of Ras Masqa, the Lebanese University – Institute of Fine Arts, Saint-Joseph University (USJ) and the Lebanese International University (LIU). Underlying BeMA’s commitment to engaging with artists and cultural institutions, #RMAR was curated by Amanda Abi Khalil, with the artist Roy Dib as artistic coordinator, and featured speakers from key Lebanese cultural institutions.

From April through June, BeMA will unveil “Works on Paper”. The program features 12 commissioned artist interventions to be published in four daily newspapers in Lebanon: Al



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Akhbar, Assafir, L'Orient Le Jour and The Daily Star. A unique way to support artists and engage with wide audiences, these interventions connect to BeMA's core mission of providing a public platform with regional and global relevancy for Lebanese and regional artists. Commissioned artists include Omar Fakhoury, Sirine Fattouh, Walid Sadek, Raafat Majzoub, Annabel Daou, Caline Aoun, Daniele Genadry, Gilbert Hage, Haig Aivazian, Ilaria Lupo, Ahmad Ghossein and Nada Sehnaoui. The project was curated by Amanda Abi Khalil and was created with the contribution of T.A.P.

Future programming includes artist publications, research and education initiatives, an online archive, and ongoing new commissions developed in collaboration with key local, regional and international partners. In the coming months the museum will announce further details about its collections and programming. The search for the museum's founding director is currently underway.

For further information on the project visit [www.amuseuminthemaking.com](http://www.amuseuminthemaking.com)

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### **Notes to Editors:**

#### **ABOUT BeMA: BEIRUT MUSEUM OF ART**

BeMA: Beirut Museum of Art is a new museum set to launch in Beirut in 2020. A new cultural hub highlighting modern and contemporary art from Lebanon and from the region, the museum will be privileging Lebanese and Lebanese Diaspora artistic creation, while also introducing regional and international artistic traditions and production. BeMA will engage with diverse communities and host cultural and educational programs, in the service of building a committed civil society. In addition to housing a collection of modern and contemporary works, the museum will also create opportunities for the production of new artistic work. BeMA will bring together different narratives, foster conversation, in connection with cultural organizations and partners across the region and globally.

#### **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.



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APEAL strives to be a point of connection in vital cultural conversations between civilizations. Composed of Lebanese and international members from around the world, the group 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>

**For Media Inquiries, please contact:**

Katrina Weber Ashour, FITZ & CO  
t: +1 (646) 589-1653  
e: [kweberashour@fitzandco.com](mailto:kweberashour@fitzandco.com)

Taylor Maatman, FITZ & CO  
t: +1 (646) 589-0926  
e: [tmaatman@fitzandco.com](mailto:tmaatman@fitzandco.com)



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## **Stat Sheet About BeMA: Beirut Museum of Art**

### **BeMA Architectural competition Timeline**

October 2015 - APEAL launched an architecture competition for the museum

April 2016 – A shortlist of 13 architects was invited to submit designs for consideration

Fall 2016 – The independent jury will announce a finalist and reveal the winning design

2020 – BeMA will open to the public

### **Jury of BeMA's Architectural competition**

Chair, Lord Peter Palumbo

Fares Al Dahdah

George Arbid

Lamia Joreige

Rodolphe Khoury

Rem Koolhaas

Julia Peyton-Jones

Hans Ulrich Obrist

Lord Richard Rogers

Honorary member, the late Zaha Hadid

The Jury also includes representatives from APEAL and Université Saint-Joseph

### **Shortlist of BeMA's Architectural competition**

109 Architectes s.a.r.l.

Bernard Khoury / DW5

Hashim Sarkis Studios, LLC

HW architecture

ibda design

IDC / Verner Johnson / ETEC SA

L.E.FT Architects

Lina Ghotmeh / DGT Architects

Najjar Najjar Architects

Raëd Abillama Architects / Nadim Khattar

WORK Architecture Company (WORKac)

Yatsu Chahal Architects (YCa) / Said Jazari Consulting Office (SJCO)

Youssef Tohme Architects and Associates (YTAA)