



FIFTY YEARS OF RESIL IENCE

A limited edition catalogue, archiving the "50 Years of Migration" exhibition, presented by artist Aquil Virani and the Aga Khan Council for Canada, and commemorating Ismaili Muslim immigration stories from across Canada



This book was designed on land we now call Toronto, on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinaabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples – on land governed by Treaty 13 with the Mississaugas of the Credit.

© 2023 Aquil Virani and various artists, photographers and storytellers included in the exhibition and catalogue book. Layout, cover and book design by Aquil Virani.



“50 Years of Migration”
Created by artist Aquil Virani
in collaboration with the
Aga Khan Council for Canada

Community submissions for “50 Years of Migration” were collected digitally throughout 2022.

Thanks to each of the photographers who captured images of the exhibition installations and events featured in the book: Karim Virani (Vancouver), Volunteer Naazish (Ottawa), Tia MacPherson (Ottawa), Akber Dewji (Ottawa), Shirin Dhanani (Montreal), Anoushka Rajan (Vancouver), Asif Bhalesha (Vancouver), Noor Panjwani (Kitchener), Salim Nensi (Toronto), Aazil Jaffer (Calgary), Alnoor Ismail (Laval), Aquil Virani (Toronto), Sweetly Walli (Brampton), and any other unnamed photographers and assistants at these events.

The exhibition contains artwork graciously funded by the Canada Council for the Arts and the Ontario Arts Council.



Canada Council
for the Arts

Conseil des Arts
du Canada



ONTARIO ARTS COUNCIL
CONSEIL DES ARTS DE L'ONTARIO
An Ontario government agency
An organisme de gouvernement de l'Ontario

AQUIL.CA

This catalogue includes
(1) a small section of **writing** related to the exhibition, (2) a presentation of exhibition **photographs** of the installations at venues across Canada,
(3) a short collection of **press clippings and comments** from visitors,
(4) an appendix of the **printed exhibition panels** reproduced here in booklet format and
(5) a **transcript** of the exhibition's audio play..



50 YEARS MIGRA

Celebrating the stories of 1st



YEARS OF MIGRATION

Immigrant migration to Canada



BIEN

SECTION 1

WRI





TING



Programs | The Making of 50 Years of Migration

THE MAKING OF 50 YEARS OF MIGRATION



Explore the inspiration behind 50 Years of Migration with Creative Director Aqul Virani.

Photo by: Mark Atwood

THE MAKING OF 50 YEARS OF MIGRATION

Date: January 24-February 12, 2023

In this interview, Aqul Virani, the Creative Director who collaborated with the Aga Khan Council for Canada to create 50 Years of Migration, shares his perspective on the exhibition and the stories that inspired it.

In a single sentence, what is the exhibition about?

This traveling grassroots exhibition features everyday stories of courage and resilience, celebrating the colourful kaleidoscope of Somali Muslim immigration to Canada over the past 50 years.

What happened 50 years ago?

In 1973, amidst growing anti-Arab sentiment and racialized resentment in East Africa, Uganda's President Idi Amin expelled all "Asians," whether citizens or not, giving them 90 days to leave the country. While many fled to Commonwealth countries or tried to return to India after the demise, the "Ugandan Asians" that came to Canada – including many Somali Muslims – represented the first mass migration of non-European and mostly non-Christian refugees in Canada's history.



Ugandan President Idi Amin's expulsion of a broadcast of the television.

What kinds of materials will visitors see and hear?

The visual aspect of the exhibition is a collage of hundreds of family

RELATED PROGRAMMING

January 24

50 Years of Migration

January 24-February 12, 2023



AGA KHAN MUSEUM

AGA KHAN MUSEUM: Q&A WITH CREATIVE DIRECTOR AQUIL VIRANI

As published on the Aga Khan Museum website:

Aquil Virani, the Creative Director who collaborated with the Aga Khan Council for Canada to create “50 Years of Migration,” shares his perspective on the exhibition and the stories that inspired it.

In a single sentence, what is the exhibition about?

This travelling grassroots exhibition honours everyday stories of courage and resilience, celebrating the colourful kaleidoscope of Ismaili Muslim migration to Canada over the past 50 years.

What happened 50 years ago?

In 1972, amidst growing anti-Asian sentiment and colonial resentment in East Africa, Uganda’s President Idi Amin expelled all “Asians,” whether citizens or not, giving them 90 days to leave the country. While many fled to Commonwealth countries or tried to return to India after the decree, the “Ugandan Asians” that came to Canada – including many Ismaili Muslims – represented the first mass migration of non-European and mostly non-Christian refugees in Canada’s history.



Ugandan President Idi Amin depicted on a black-and-white television inside someone's home.

What kinds of materials will visitors see and hear?

The visual aspect of the exhibition is a collage of hundreds of family photographs, first-hand accounts and quotes, maps, timelines, and historical documents with a few artworks sprinkled in. The exhibition also includes an “audio play” – similar to a podcast – that weaves together personal interviews so that you hear directly from the voices of the project participants. The vocal storytelling is an emotive complement to the printed panels, playing freely on a loop as visitors walk through.

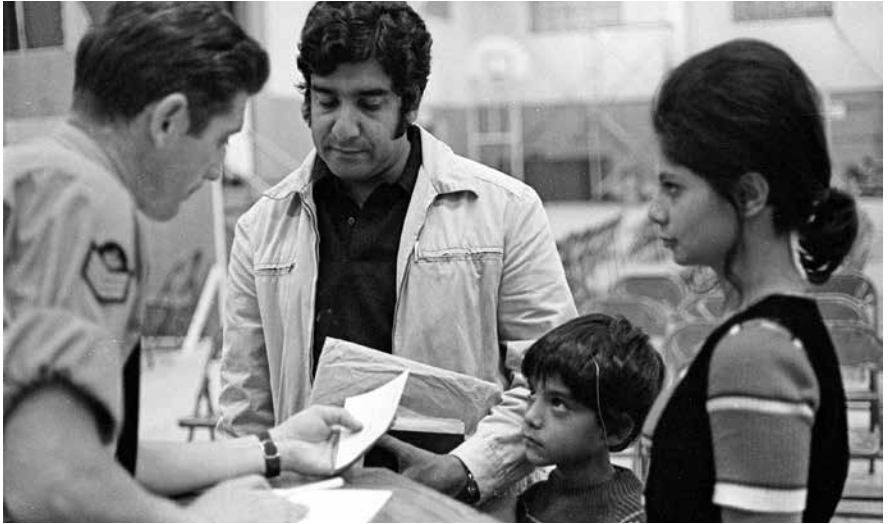
The exhibition panels begin with an explanation of Ismailism and a timeline of Ismailis in Canada – why was it important to start with this?

I wanted to establish a contextual foundation to help visitors understand Ismaili Muslims as well as to share these stories with Ismailis themselves to further their historical understanding.

Were there any surprising stories you came across in building the exhibition?

One surprise to me was how improvised and adaptable the Canadian immigration officials acted “on the ground” in Uganda in 1972. Canada didn’t have an embassy there at the

time; they flew out of Lebanon and established a temporary office within a few days. With breaking news, changing rules, shifting mandates, frequent intimidation and posturing by the Ugandan military (and no internet), they relied on the major newspaper to call applicants back to the office for interviews using coded, anonymized numbers that corresponded to an individual applicant's case number.



Canadian immigration officials welcome Ugandan refugees in Longue Pointe, Quebec in 1972 (Library and Archives Canada).

Do you have a favourite panel? Or a favourite story? Could you choose one to share?

As an Ismaili who grew up in Canada, I was excited to learn about a link between the 1972 Summit Series and a visit from His Highness the Aga Khan with immigration officials in Canada. Who would have thought the score of a hockey game might inadvertently affect the number of refugees accepted by Canada? On the printed panels, I call it “the hockey story.”

Does the exhibition focus on Uganda? Or does it share stories from other communities?

The exhibition uses 1972's Ugandan Asian expulsion as a jumping-off point but features plenty of diverse stories, whether told by Ugandan Ismailis, Afghan Ismailis, Syrian Ismailis, or Tajik Ismailis, among many others. The group of "Ugandan Asians" that settled in Canada starting in 1972 were the first significant wave of Ismailis to settle here, so they serve in a way as the first chapter of the Ismaili-Canadian story. They were a "test case" in many ways as the first significant wave of non-European, non-Christian refugees in Canada's history.

What was the hardest part of creating the exhibition?

I put pressure on myself to do a good job and create materials that were worthy of representing my community. The most daunting task was to fit an immensely diverse and voluminous collection of stories into a finite number of panels. There wasn't enough space to fit every single story, but we strived to properly represent different segments of our community – geographically, ethnically, gender-wise, and so on. I likened the project to "fitting a rainbow in a suitcase." We did our best.



Ayub Nazari fled from Afghanistan in 1994 with his entire family, parents, six brothers, one sister and their families.

Have you worked on such a scale before, integrating hundreds of different community-submitted materials in a national exhibition, touring across the country?

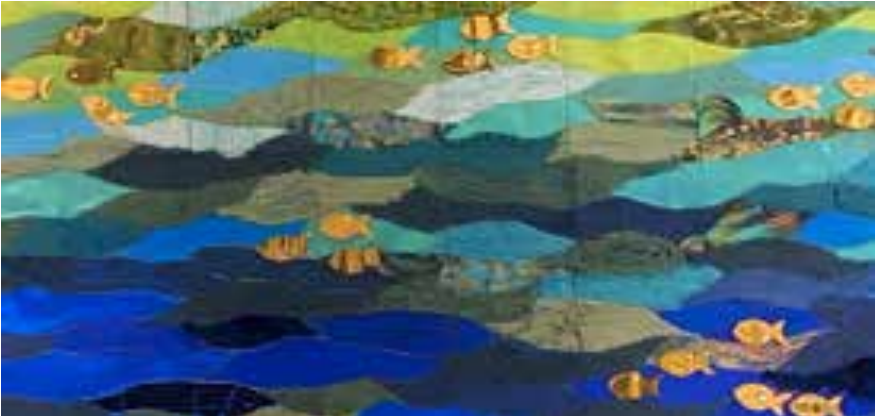
In 2014, I worked with facilitator Rebecca Jones to create “*Canada’s Self Portrait*,” a collaborative art project that integrated over 800 drawings about our national identity from everyday participants in all 13 provinces and territories. The final artworks were exhibited at Stewart Hall Art Gallery in Pointe-Claire, Quebec, Galerie Mile End in Montreal, and at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21 in Halifax in 2016.

If visitors are inspired to share their stories, what can they do?

Ismaili Canadians can still contribute their story to the 50-year archive on iicanada.org. Most iterations of the exhibition will include “participatory” activities where visitors can write on stickers that are pasted onto special panels. My hope is that reading others’ stories will inspire more people to take the time to write down the details of their own lives. We often assume our family remembers more than they actually do. I always remind others: write it down.

You’re a professional visual artist. Can you tell us about some of the art included in the exhibition?

While the exhibition is predominantly an “anthology of first-hand accounts,” it is also a creative storytelling exhibition. One of the featured artworks is a mixed-media mural titled “Our Journey Upstream.” The community-led project was facilitated by Ottawa-based artist Narmin Kassam. I thought, “What better way to complement the written stories in the exhibition than by presenting a colourful visual metaphor of our community’s history?”



Artist Narmin Kassam helped to facilitate this beautiful community-based mural in Ottawa in 2021.

How long did you spend building the exhibition?

I spent hundreds of hours (probably about 400 hours), over several months, researching, writing, gathering, corresponding, interviewing, editing, photo editing, designing panels, editing text, and producing the audio play. It was definitely a labour of love, submitted in service to the community.

Are there any panels that didn't make it into the final exhibition?

Tons! In addition to having to shorten some of the text submissions and trim some of the newspaper clippings we presented, there were also a few artworks that I had to edit out. One of the panels was an optical illusion that couldn't be read unless you stood in the right spot with instructions, you could step to the side and view it from the appropriate angle. As an exercise in perspectives and empathy-building, it would read "Please put yourself in our shoes."

Where and when will the exhibition travel?

Over the next several months, the 50-year commemorative exhibition will travel to places of Ismaili communion and prayer (called Jamatkhana) and other Ismaili-related institutions across Canada.

Will there be volunteers available to answer questions?

Yes, our goal is to have volunteers available for the duration of the exhibition. They won't act as tour guides, but they will welcome visitors and answer any questions, especially for non-Ismaili attendees.



*An Ismaili Muslim celebration in Montreal in 2016
(photographed by Muslim Harji Images).*

Share with us why the Jamatkhana will be used as an exhibition venue.

1. I love community exhibition spaces; there's no better way to connect with people than to bring art to them directly. 2. Our Jamatkhana's are often artworks in themselves – marvels of architecture, geometry, and interior design. 3. It's fitting to share these stories in our Jamatkhana's which are hubs for culture and community. I have gone to "khane" since I was a baby. These community halls are a place to convene, to reflect, to celebrate.

For the launch of the exhibition, the Aga Khan Museum is the perfect backdrop to showcase these stories.

In a recent essay published about your work, writer Devyani Saltzman talks about seva as a central concept in your work. Can you tell us about that?

As an Ismaili kid born in Vancouver, I grew up around volunteers. My parents, aunts and uncles served as community leaders. And so, a lot of the moral questions in my work stem from that ingrained sense of service to others. It was actually a conversation I had with a fellow Ismaili artist, Salima Punjani, where I realized that my constant desire to “make an impact” or “help someone” with my artwork comes from that Ismaili concept of seva.

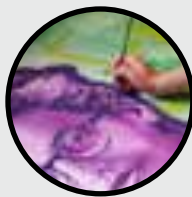
So how do you fit a rainbow in a suitcase? Have you figured that part out?

When we tell stories, anything is possible.

[Learn more about artist Aquil Virani's work at aquil.ca.](http://aquil.ca)

[Visit the exhibition at the Aga Khan Museum, on now until February 12, 2023.](#)

“Despite the challenges and expectations of the systems we operate within, Virani’s work is a rare collaborative commons where everyday stories are heard and shared, shaped by colour and form, and ultimately given back to community in the **spirit of solidarity and seva**. In a world increasingly divided, he continues to listen.”



– Devyani Saltzman, in essay “Aquil Virani celebrates the stories of everyday people” (aquil.ca/essay)



OTTAWA
CITIZEN

JAFFER: A CANADIAN ISMAILI-MUSLIM SENATOR MARKS 50 YEARS OF CONNECTING VALUES

As published in the Ottawa Citizen:

I am lucky that my two greatest blessings, being Canadian and Ismaili Muslim, are not only able to peacefully co-exist, but actively interact and build upon one another.

Being an Ismaili Muslim woman is a very important part of my identity. On numerous occasions I have risen in the chamber of the Canadian Senate, on conference stages and in media interviews and proudly spoken about my Ismaili heritage. I do this because I have an immense debt of gratitude to the community and His Highness the Aga Khan, the spiritual leader of more than 15 million Ismaili Muslims around the world. I believe I owe my success, honours, awards and milestones of my life to the values instilled in me as an Ismaili Muslim.



Senator Mobina Jaffer (left) greeting the Aga Khan (right) in 2018. Photo supplied by Senator Mobina Jaffer.

Recently, the Ismaili Muslim community in Canada marked the 50th anniversary of its substantial presence in Canada. In August 1972, Idi Amin announced that the 60,000 South Asians in the country were to leave Uganda within 90 days. My father, Sherali Bandali Jaffer, as a former member of Parliament, had to flee earlier as his life was in danger. The Aga Khan, the spiritual leader of the community, and Prince Sadruddin Aga Khan, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, came to our rescue with the aid of many countries.

Happily, along with 6,000 other South Asians from Uganda, my family and I were able to seek asylum in Canada. Despite our struggles, it was the kindness and openness of Canadians that provided us with a chance at building a new life.

I was privileged to be able to turn that adversity into success. I become the first practising female South Asian lawyer in Canada; was appointed as Queen's (now King's) Counsel; and was privileged to be appointed the first Muslim member of the Senate of Canada; the first African-born senator; and the first senator of South Asian descent.

But I was certainly not the last. The story of struggle, hard work and progress is that of thousands of Canadian Ismailis, and of so many, over history, who chose to call Canada their home.

But the story of generosity is not unidirectional. Over the last 50 years, Ismailis from all walks of life have worked tirelessly to give back to this country that has given them so much: former Calgary mayor Naheed Nenshi; anchors Omar Sachedina and Farah Nasser; novelist M.G. Vassanji; Ms Marvel's Iman Vellani are but a few. Inspired by the guidance of the Aga Khan, thousands of Canadian Ismailis have been strong and active contributors to the civic, cultural and social lives of the communities in which they live.

The Aga Khan is the 49th hereditary Imam-of-the-time (spiritual leader) of the Shia Ismaili Muslim community. As part of the mandate of his role, he has been a significant contributor to improvement in our quality of life: showcasing Muslim art and intellect through the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto; bringing together East and West at the Aga Khan Garden in Alberta and Aga Khan Park in Toronto; working to alleviate poverty through the Aga Khan Foundation Canada; and, in partnership with the federal government, building societies of mutual respect and understanding through the Global Centre for Pluralism in Ottawa.

Recently, members of the Aga Khan's family including his brother, Prince Ameen, and his children, Princess Zahra and Prince Rahim, were in Canada for ceremonies to commemorate the Ismaili community's 50-year anniversary and to launch initiatives for the next 50. In Toronto, the Aga Khan was conferred the key to the city for his contributions to Toronto and his global humanitarian work. In Edmonton, the Diwan pavilion at the Aga Khan Garden was inaugurated, supporting the garden's mandate of providing a venue for dialogue and engagement. In Vancouver, an

Agreement of Cooperation between the Government of British Columbia and the Ismaili Imamate solidifies a partnership with a focus on addressing issues of climate change in B.C. and around the world.

The significance of these events goes beyond just the buildings, the agreements or the accolades that will emerge from them. What is truly to be celebrated is that in a world wracked with insular and sectarian thinking, there are reassuring forces propelling us in kinder, gentler directions. Thousands of Ugandans lost their lives or endured unspeakable trauma in the crisis wrought by Idi Amin. But what gives us hope is that what can emerge from brutality is a set of enduring values which, right now, the world needs to see, and hear.

I am lucky to be in a position where my two greatest blessings, being Canadian and Ismaili Muslim, are not only able to peacefully co-exist, but can actively interact and build upon one another. Today and every day, I am grateful for these multiple identities, and also for the acceptance and deep commitment to equal opportunity that this country continues to expound. May Canada continue to serve as a beacon of hope for all.

Sen. Mobina Jaffer represents British Columbia in the Senate of Canada. Appointed on June 13, 2001 by prime minister Jean Chrétien, she is the first Muslim senator, the first African-born senator, and the first senator of South Asian descent.



Senator Mobina Jaffer getting married to Nuralla Jeraj in Uganda in 1971. Just one year later, the family would be ordered out of the country. Photo submitted to Canadian Geographic.

A SHORT REFLECTION ON THE “50 YEARS OF MIGRATION” EXHIBITION

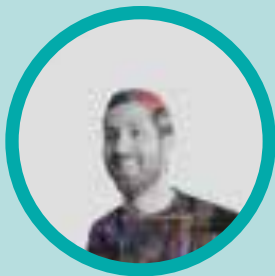
Written by Creative Director, Aquil Virani

It was my pleasure and honour to serve as the Creative Director of the “50 Years of Migration” exhibition. In addition to the participant correspondence, research, development, writing and graphic design of the panels, I also crafted the audio play from archival interviews and press sources.

Any opportunity I can seize to align my artistic pursuits with service to the community (seva) is a small win. As the son of two immigrants to Canada – my father from Tanzania and my mother from France – I did my best to create a thorough and inclusive collection of stories to celebrate our Ismaili Muslim settlement here in Canada. I mostly grew up in Surrey, BC, going to Fraser Valley Jamatkhana, and I wanted to do justice to the perseverance and examples set by the aunties and uncles of my community. I wanted to privilege real, authentic stories from everyday people while asking important questions about what our settlement means today. I received many responses from audience members – from the Ismaili community and the broader Canadian public – with words of encouragement and thanks.

After creating the exhibition materials, I have been indebted to countless volunteers across the country who contributed to the implementation or “roll out” of the exhibition. I know that there are too many stories to fit in a finite narrative, but I am so proud of what we accomplished together in presenting a grassroots, multi-media account of 50+ years of migration to Canada. I am also grateful to the institutions that amplified the voices in the exhibition by hosting the exhibition.

I truly believe in the importance of telling our own stories, of “writing things down,” of taking a moment to look back on where we have been, where we are, and where we are going.

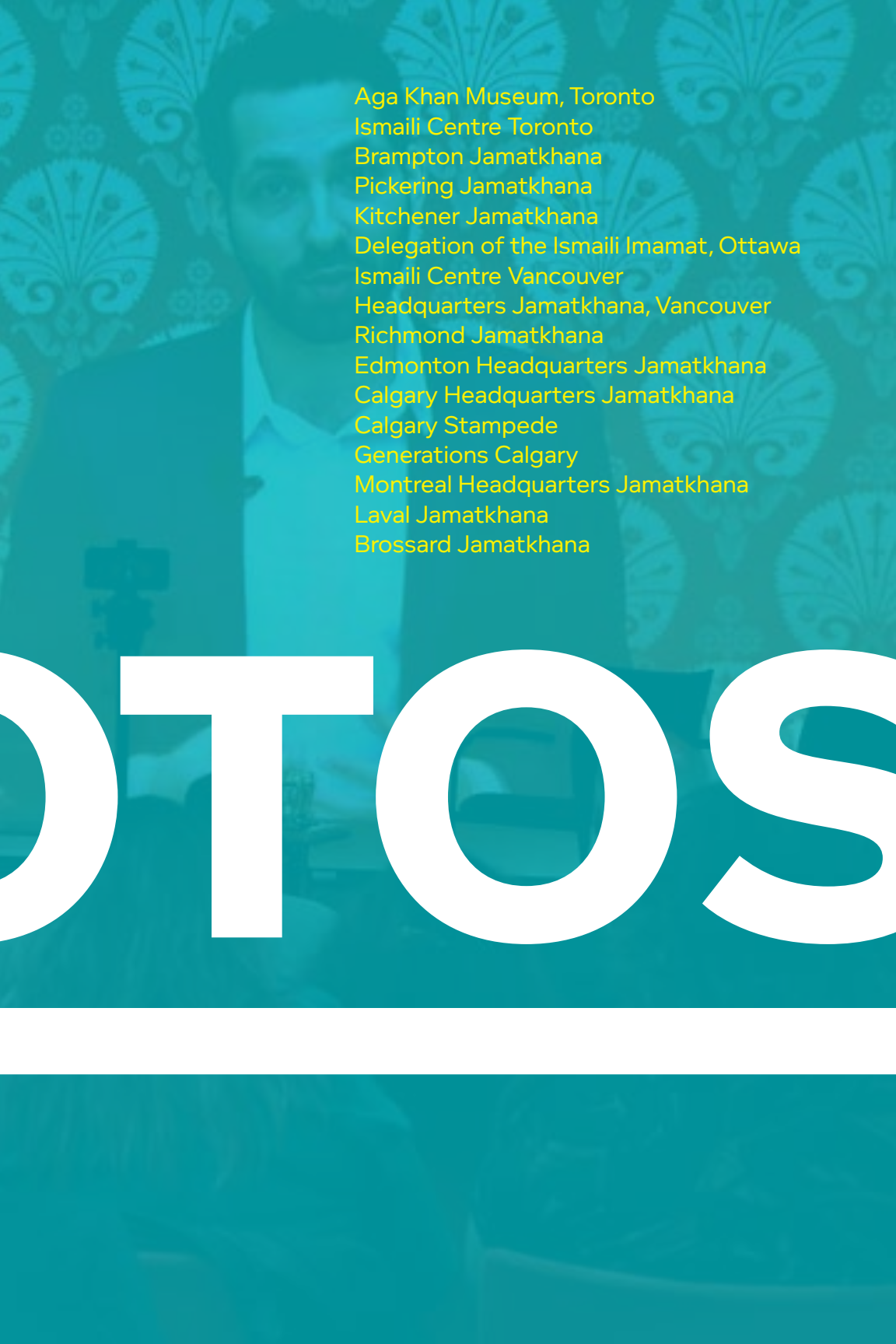


A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "A Virani". The signature is stylized and includes a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Aquil Virani
Creative Director

SECTION 2

PHO



Aga Khan Museum, Toronto
Ismaili Centre Toronto
Brampton Jamatkhana
Pickering Jamatkhana
Kitchener Jamatkhana
Delegation of the Ismaili Imam, Ottawa
Ismaili Centre Vancouver
Headquarters Jamatkhana, Vancouver
Richmond Jamatkhana
Edmonton Headquarters Jamatkhana
Calgary Headquarters Jamatkhana
Calgary Stampede
Generations Calgary
Montreal Headquarters Jamatkhana
Laval Jamatkhana
Brossard Jamatkhana

OTOS

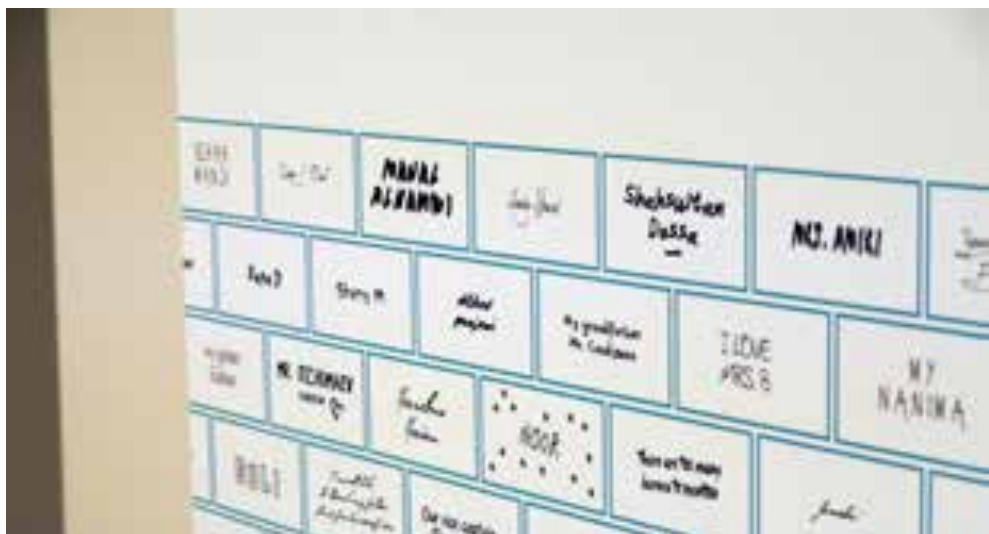




Brampton, ON

🏛️ AGA KHAN MUSEUM, TORONTO





50

50 Years of Migration

Commemorating 50 years of migration to Canada, the Department of Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) is proud to celebrate the contributions of immigrants and refugees to the success of our country. This is a time to reflect on the many ways in which newcomers have enriched our lives and helped build a stronger Canada.



Visit the website www.ircc.gc.ca for more information on immigration and refugees.



For more information, contact 1-877-975-3739.



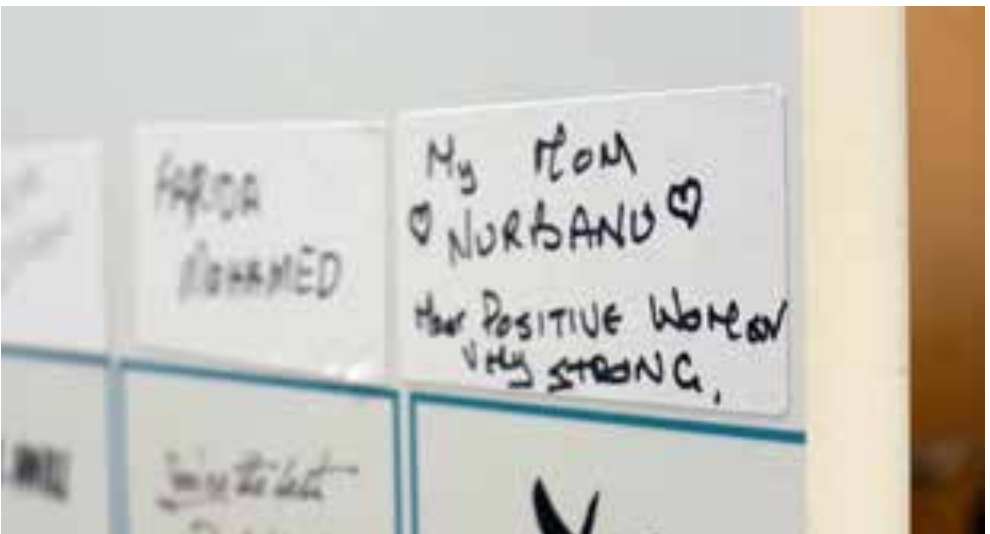
How do we build a better world?

Text describing the content of the poster, including a list of bullet points.



Toronto, ON

🏠 ISMAILI CENTRE TORONTO









Toronto, ON





ISMAILI CENTRE VANCOUVER









Vancouver, BC





Vancouver, BC

MIGRATION

*Celebrating the stories of
Gmaili migration to Canada*





Vancouver, BC

🏠 RICHMOND JAMATKHANA (CANADA DAY



2023 CELEBRATIONS)



BRAMPTON JAMATKHANA





*Elsewhere in Africa,
"the writing was
on the wall"*

"Many hundreds of Ismailis from Tanzania – if not [more] – had already arrived and settled in Canada well before the Ugandan exodus in October 1972."
– Sadru Meghji

"Ismailis from French-speaking Zaire also left. Many, including my own family, settled in Quebec."
– Amin Jivraj

In April 1972, the Tanzanian government announced – pursuant to the 1967 Arusha Declaration – the imminent nationalization of banks, major businesses, insurance companies, farms, and schools. Ismaili "business" in Tanzania (farms, businesses) and Zaire were never explicitly "nationalized" (the situation in Zaire had not yet become public) but the Ismaili exodus proceeded owing to Ismaili announcements.

"So when they ask me, 'Where are you from,' all 'What are you?' I say, 'Listen, this is where my parents were. They have Indian ancestry. The Portuguese colonized Goa. Then they came to East Africa because of the British colonies, and that's where we were born. So we have Indian ancestry, mostly Portuguese with some Indian culture or background, Catholic, mixed religion and British citizenship. I explain it to them in that way.'" – Enal Francis

🏠 PICKERING JAMATKHANA





KITCHENER JAMATKHANA





HEADQUARTERS VANCOUVER









Vancouver, BC

DELEGATION OF THE ISMAILI IMAMAT IN



CANADA, OTTAWA







Vancouver, BC

🏢 CALGARY HEADQUARTERS + STAMPEDE







GENERATIONS CALGARY





🏢 MONTREAL HEADQUARTERS









Calgary, AB

LAVAL JAMATKHANA





BROSSARD JAMATKHANA









Brossard, QC

EDMONTON HEADQUARTERS



***How did our
grandparents and
parents move to
Canada? Check out
the 50 Years of
Migration visit at
HQJK- open daily an
hour before and an
hour after JK
ceremonies***



SSAF1111

What is Charv's 9

6 2 01

11

18/1

DS
let
ries
on
up?



RUWENGA
-LAND
-PLAINS OF THE
-MOUNTAINS
-MOUNTAINS
-MOUNTAINS
-MOUNTAINS
-MOUNTAINS
-MOUNTAINS
-MOUNTAINS

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40
41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50
51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60
61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70
71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80
81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90
91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100



ed to Canada
my dreams

After a year of struggle in a foreign country (Pakistan), I arrived in Sherbrooke, Quebec. Relocating to a new country exacerbated the challenges associated with adjusting and adapting to new norms and customs while preserving our ancestral culture. My academic career had to be relaunched. I returned to high school in order to excel in college, then attended university. Now, I'm enrolled in the Institute of Ismail Studies. As a youth mentor for the Canadian Council for Refugees (Youth Network), I have decided to give back: what this beautiful country has given: a second chance to rebuild the future that I was unable to envision in Afghanistan. I'm immensely grateful to my family for the provided support, unwavering love, and trust.

SECTION 3

#E

Canadian

As the past year's artist-in-residence, Aquil Virani (@aquil.v) is an award-winning artist. This suitcase painting part of a series depicts an Ismaili man from Tanzania, over

BUZZ

... email

n identity

...ence at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21,
...-winning visual artist, graphic designer and filmmaker.
... larger series funded by the Ontario Arts Council, depicts
...veloping a romanticized "Canadian landscape"



North Shore Daily Post



Exhibition touring BC showcases contributions of Ismaili Muslim community



A travelling exhibition showcasing the progress and contributions of the Ismaili Muslim community in Canada has been touring British Columbia and is now in its final days at the Ismaili Centre, Vancouver.

On Saturday April 1, the Ismaili community (along with the Vancouver Art Gallery who co- sponsored the event) hosted a discussion with stories of migration moderated by Sirish Rao, Director of Public Engagement and Learning from the Vancouver Art Gallery, Senator Mobina Jaffer and Arran Stephens of Natures Path to an audience that included:

Senator Mobina Jaffer; Anne Kang – MLA – Burnaby Deer Lake;
Ruby Campbell – City Councilor – City of New Westminster;
Joao Costa – Consul General – Consulate General of Portugal;
Manish Manish – Consul General – Consulate General of India;
Ghulam Hussain – Vice Consul – Consulate General of Pakistan.



Not for profit leaders, representatives from nearby Universities, and members from the Ummah community etc. The panel discussion touched on migration and refugee issues of the day, the personal journeys of the panelists, and the importance of identity and languages.

Samir Manji, President for the Council for British Columbia, in his remarks to the audience stated the following: "The ongoing settlement of the community here in Canada has also been one deeply shaped and supported by the Government of Canada, the work of the Imamat Institutions and the guidance of His Highness the Aga Khan. It is a story of partnership built upon the bedrock of a shared value system, and a joint commitment to the values of peace, of pluralism, of a respect for diversity and difference, and of the value of service."

The exhibition commemorates 50 years of the presence of the Shi'a Imami Ismaili Muslims in Canada along with recent immigration stories of other Ismaili newcomers from Syria, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, India, Pakistan and beyond. The exhibit is presented by the Ismaili Council for Canada in collaboration with award-winning Canadian artist Aquil Virani.



Doug Ford, Premier of Ontario: "I have always believed our province is richer and more vibrant where unique cultural stories are brought to centre stage. In that spirit, this event is an opportunity to honour the journey of Ismaili Canadians.

Today, Ontario is proud to be home to a flourishing community of Ismaili Canadians who have made their mark in public service, the arts, business, and all fields. I want to thank our Ismaili Muslim community for all they have brought to Ontario's success story.

Our government will continue to work with our diverse faith communities to build a strong and resilient Ontario, now and in the future. Best wishes for a meaningful and inspiring celebration." (Ottawa)



Jagmeet Singh, Leader of federal NDP Party: “To see the Ismaili community not just come to Canada and get by, but to thrive and then to give back is a true testament to the Ismaili community, and, I think, a beautiful example of what we want to achieve here in Canada: create a home for people to come in to thrive, and to create a home where people can contribute in such a meaningful way. So I just want to acknowledge the resilience of the Ismaili community to have contributed in such a beautiful and powerful way across the country and across the globe.”
(Vancouver)

Exhibition showcasing contributions of the Ismaili Muslim community in Canada to be on display in Brampton

MPP Deepak Anand, Brampton Coun. Pat Fortini will explore the exhibition on Thursday, March 16



By Nathan Paul

Wed., March 15, 2023 01 min. read

[Get Brampton on My Local News](#)



A travelling exhibition showcasing the progress and contributions of the Ismaili Muslim community in Canada is set to be on display in the City of Brampton.

MPP Deepak Anand, Brampton Coun. Pat Fortini and the Ismaili Council for Canada will explore the “50 Years of Migration” exhibition on Thursday, March 16, from 3 to 5 p.m. at Brampton Jamatkhana, according to a media release. The March 16 event is for invited guests only.



[...] The exhibition commemorates 50 years of the presence of the Shi'a Imami Ismaili Muslims in Canada and showcases the courage and resilience of countless Ismaili Muslims who fled their homelands in search of refuge elsewhere, sharing stories about their experiences and what establishing strong roots in Canada has meant to them.

With hundreds of family photographs, first-hand accounts, historical documents and personal interviews, the immersive exhibition highlights the events that took place in East Africa in the early 1970s that led to the first mass migration of over 6,000 Ismaili Muslims to Canada. The exhibition also explores recent immigration stories of other Ismaili newcomers from Syria, Afghanistan, Tajikistan, India, Pakistan and beyond.

The exhibit is presented by the Ismaili Council for Canada in collaboration with award-winning Canadian artist Aquil Virani. It debuted at the Aga Khan Museum in Toronto earlier this year and will continue to tour Jamatkhana (Ismaili community centres and congregational settings) and community spaces across Canada.



“Travelling storytelling exhibition on Ismaili migration comes to Ottawa.” CBC Ottawa Morning.

Aquil Virani on CBC Ottawa Morning: “There are so many stories to choose from (it’s a little bit like choosing which child to talk about). We have a story from Fady Almessyaty who came from Syria who worked very hard at a retail job and eventually got a degree from McGill University. We have a story from Shamsiya from Tajikistan who had an amazing journey via Switzerland and Mozambique, before eventually settling here in Ottawa. As well, narminkassamart.com – she shared some of her artwork. A mural she created with Ottawa and Kingston-based Ismaili Muslims titled “Journey Upstream.” And one story that comes to mind for me from Azeem Motani – he talks about his journey from Uganda. Eventually, he studies to be an accountant and he places at the top of his class in Ontario. And during an acceptance speech, he jokes tongue-in-cheek and thanks Idi Amin saying “There’s no way I would’ve chosen the harsh winters of Canada.” So this is a bit of the flavour of the exhibition. Some of the resilience and the humour that is shown by many of these Ismaili Muslims – my community, who I respect and I am happy to celebrate.”



Shezan Muhammedi, PhD: "An incredible exhibit on display at the Delegation of the Ismaili Imamats open to the public this Thursday to Sunday from 12pm - 6pm (free entry and no booking required!) on the history of the Ismaili Muslim community in Canada featuring an amazing photo exhibit and timeline with contributions from MacOdrum Library #UgandanAsians #refugees #cdnimm"



Yasir Naqvi, MP: « Je remercie tous les memres de la Pickering Jamatkhana de m'avoir accueillie, et je promets de toujours travailler avec vous pour que le Canada rest accueillant, diversifié et inclusif. En visitant l'exposition, « 50 Years of Migration, » j'ai été inspirée par les contributions de la communauté musulmane ismaélienne. »



Dr. Shela Hirani, PhD, RN, IBCLC: "Honored to be featured in the '50 Years of Migraiton' exhibition presented by the Ag Khan council for Canada in collaboration with award-winning Canadian artist Aquil Virani that debuted at the @AgaKhanMuseum."



Patrick Brown, Mayor of Brampton: "Happy to celebrate the Ismaili community's 50th anniversary of being in Canada at the #Brampton Jamatkhana. The exhibition commemorates 50 years of settlement of the Ismailis in Canada and the contirubtion to the social, cultural, and economic fabric of Canada."



Kaleed Rasheed with Harkirat Singh and Deepak Anand:

"I'd like to thank the Ismaili community for allowing me to attend and address everyone at the '50 Years of Migration' event. The speeches were very moving, and the exhibition from Canadian artist, Aquil Virani, was incredibly beautiful. This event truly honours the collective resilience and colourful kaleidoscope that is the Ismaili Muslim community and I'm very honoured to be a part of it!"



Amin Jivraj: « Tout simplement pour te dire que plusieurs personnes qui ont vu l'exposition à travers le Canada étaient surprises et contentes de voir mon histoire et mes photos, et les ont partagées avec la famille et les amis. Tu as fait un travail superbe d'avoir "raffiné" mon histoire et je te remercie. Ma famille à Montréal et à Ottawa a hâte de voir l'exposition. La façon dont tu as monté toute l'exposition est admirable: c'est tout un chef d'œuvre. Mes Mubarakis les plus chaleureux. »





Stories and music shared in new Ismaili exhibition on Montreal's South Shore



Christine Luong
CTV News Montreal Videograpicist

Marking 50 years as part of the social fabric of Quebec and Canada, the Ismaili Muslim community unveiled a new exhibition in Brossard on Montreal's South Shore.

[...] Kanwal Hayat, a member of the Ismaili Muslim community, said they're showcasing their migration stories "and the history of the community in Canada."

"It was a proud moment with this commemoration event, what the community has been through, how resilient we have been as a community and what we've achieved," she said, "and also kind of a look to the future with hope and aspirations for what we want to continue to achieve in this land that we've now made our home."



A woman with short dark hair, wearing a light-colored patterned shirt, is looking at a display board. The board is covered with various documents, photos, and text. The background is a light blue color with a subtle pattern. The text 'APPENDIX 1' is overlaid in white, bold, uppercase letters.

APPENDIX 1

PAI

NEWS





50 Years of Migration

Commemorating the progress and contributions of the Ismaili Muslim community in Canada, this grassroots exhibition honours our collective resilience and celebrates the colourful kaleidoscope that is our community. Using a vibrant collage of family photographs, timelines, maps, and historical documents, this touring exhibition tells the stories of members of the Ismaili Muslim community who have come from around the world to make this country their home and help build a stronger Canada.



Visit the exhibition website
to view all the panels and
read more!



For translated materials
Pour du contenu en français



BUILDING A STRONGER CANADA

*Celebrating the stories of
Immigration to Canada*



© 2011 by the Aga Khan Development Program. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system, without the prior written permission of the Aga Khan Development Program.

Who are the Ismailis? A global context

The Ismaili Muslims are a culturally diverse community of approximately twelve to fifteen million living all over the world.



Ismailis live in over 25 countries, including Afghanistan, Austria, Bangladesh, Canada, Denmark, Republic of the Congo, Denmark, France, Germany, India, Iran, Kenya, Madagascar, Republic of the Union of Myanmar (Burma), Pakistan, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Tanzania, Uganda, United Kingdom, the United States of America and Yemen.

The community (or "jama'at") adheres to a 1,400-year tradition of Shi'a values that are expressed through a commitment to a search for knowledge for the betterment of self and society; embracing pluralism by building bridges of peace and understanding; and generously sharing of one's time, talents, and material resources to improve the quality of life of the community and those among whom they live.

The Shi'a Imam (Ismaili Muslim), generally known as the Ismaili, belongs to the Shi'a branch of Islam. The Shi'a form one of the two major interpretations of Islam, the Sunni being the other. Throughout their 1,400-year history, the Imams have been led by a living, hereditary Imam. They trace the line of Imams to hereditary succession from Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Prophet Muhammad (they possess the same line). The followers of Ali, or Shi'a, already in existence during the lifetime of the Prophet, maintained that while the succession ceased at the Prophet's death, the need for spiritual and moral guidance of the community continued. The institution of Imamat was to continue thereafter on a hereditary basis, succession being based on designation by the Imam of the Time.





1871

Canada's first census notes 13 "European Muslims" living in Canada, four years after confederation.

1936

Aga Khan III and Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King correspond about League of Nations presidency



1952

Safar Ali Ismaili from Pakistan is believed to be one of the first Ismailis recorded in Canada, settling in Ottawa, ON

1957



Prince Karim Aga Khan becomes 40th Imam of the Sh'a Nizari Ismaili Muslims (July 11, 1957)

1962

Milton Obote leads Uganda to independence from British colonial rule



1967-69

Major nationalization programs in Kenya and Tanzania result in many Ismailis leaving, some of whom are accepted in Canada

1972

One year after taking power in a coup d'état, Idi Amin expels Ugandan Asians, resulting in thousands of Ismailis and others of South Asian origin arriving in Canada

1973

The Council for Canada, the Grants Council, and the Ismaili Association for Canada are established



1978



Mawlana Hazar Imam makes his first Jamati visit to Canada and meets with Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau



1982

Mawlana Hazar Imam visits Canada to commemorate his Silver Jubilee. Foundation ceremony of Ismaili Centre, Vancouver in Mawlana Hazar Imam's presence; Mawlana Hazar Imam and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney officially open Ismaili Centre, Vancouver in 1985

1983



Mawlana Hazar Imam visits Canada during his Silver Jubilee

1985

First World Partnership Walk held in Vancouver; Iranian Ismailis flee Iran with some eventually settling in Canada



1987

Murad Velshi is elected as Member of Provincial Parliament (MPP) of Ontario, the first Ismaili to be elected to a provincial legislature in Canada

1992

Mawlana Hazar Imam visits the Canadian Jamat in five major centres; The Council for Quebec and Maritime Provinces signs a protocol agreement with the Quebec Government to sponsor refugees from Central Asia



1993

Nurjehan Mawani of Ottawa is the first Ismaili and first Muslim to be invested as a Member of the Order of Canada

1994

Toronto Headquarters Jamatkhana is opened

Princess Zahra chairs the International Women's Forum in Toronto

1997

Rahim Jaffer becomes the first Ismaili to be elected as a Federal Member of Parliament (MP), representing the riding of Strathcona in Edmonton



2001

Prime Minister Jean Chrétien appoints Mobina Jaffer to the Senate, becoming the first Ismaili Senator in Canada

2002

Mawlana Hazar Imam visits Canada and announces the establishment of the Aga Khan Museum and the Global Centre for Pluralism

Mawlana Hazar Imam conferred Companion of the Order of Canada



2005

Foundation Ceremony of the Delegation of the Ismaili Imamat takes place in Ottawa in the presence of Mawlana Hazar Imam and Governor General Adrienne Clarkson; Mawlana Hazar Imam conducts Jamati visits in Vancouver and Toronto

2008

Mawlana Hazar Imam and Prime Minister Stephen Harper inaugurate the Delegation of the Ismaili Imamat in Ottawa; Mawlana Hazar Imam visits Canada for his Golden Jubilee celebrations



Naheed Nenshi is elected in Calgary as the first Muslim mayor of a large North American city

2010

Prime Minister Stephen Harper confers Honorary Canadian Citizenship upon Mawlana Hazar Imam; Mawlana Hazar Imam performs foundation ceremony of the Ismaili Centre, Toronto and Aga Khan Museum

2011

Syrian Ismailis fleeing civil war arrive in Canada

2014



Mawlana Hazar Imam makes historic speech to the Parliament of Canada; Mawlana Hazar Imam opens the Aga Khan Museum and the Ismaili Centre, Toronto



2015

Mawlana Hazar Imam inaugurates Aga Khan Park in Toronto



2017

Official opening of the Global Centre for Pluralism in Ottawa in the presence of Mawlana Hazar Imam; Mawlana Hazar Imam visits Eastern Canada in commemoration of his Diamond Jubilee.



2020

Saima Lakhani, in Alberta, becomes the first Muslim Lieutenant Governor in Canada

2022



Key to the City of Toronto awarded to Mawlana Hazar Imam, groundbreaking ceremony for Generations Toronto, and a segment of Wynford Drive in Toronto is ceremonially named "Aga Khan Boulevard"



2008

Mawlana Hagar Imam at the
Inauguration of the Delegation of
the Ismail Imamat in Ottawa.



2016

Mawlana Hazrat Imam receives
the Adrienne Clarkson Award
for Global Citizenship.



“The principal waves of migration from the Indian subcontinent began in 1840. The second major group of migrants did not arrive until European colonization in 1840s, which required thousands of labourers to construct both Kenya and Uganda’s railway systems. This group of indentured labourers who chose to remain in East Africa form the basis of the central myth that all South Asians living in Uganda at the time of the expulsion were descendants of the railway workers “who forgot to go home.”

– Shezan Muhammedi

“While their roots may have indeed been in the Indian subcontinent, those now deemed “Asian” had in fact been living in Uganda and across the region long before the exodus.” – Taushif Kara

“The Allidina brothers arrived as merchants in Uganda in 1896 from Kutch, following the guidance of Mawlana Sultan Mohamed Shah.

Varas Rahemtulla Allidina was our grandfather.”

– Yasmin Allidina



In search of something bigger

When they moved to Toronto in 1965, the family was looking for a place to call home. They found it in a quiet neighborhood in Scarborough. The house was a simple, two-story bungalow with a small front porch. It was a good start, but they knew they needed more space. They started looking for a bigger house, and eventually found one in a more affluent neighborhood. The house was a three-story colonial-style mansion with a large garden and a swimming pool. It was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975.

The house was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975. It was a three-story colonial-style mansion with a large garden and a swimming pool. It was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975. The house was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975. It was a three-story colonial-style mansion with a large garden and a swimming pool. It was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975.

Toronto. A happy home

When they moved to Toronto in 1965, the family was looking for a place to call home. They found it in a quiet neighborhood in Scarborough. The house was a simple, two-story bungalow with a small front porch. It was a good start, but they knew they needed more space. They started looking for a bigger house, and eventually found one in a more affluent neighborhood. The house was a three-story colonial-style mansion with a large garden and a swimming pool. It was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975.

The house was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975. It was a three-story colonial-style mansion with a large garden and a swimming pool. It was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975. The house was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975. It was a three-story colonial-style mansion with a large garden and a swimming pool. It was a dream come true, and they moved in in 1975.



In search of something bigger

Shaneela Jivraj: In July of 1961 in Hyderabad, Pakistan, young Nazarat Faqirmohamed Shalwani decided he wanted something bigger for his life. To realize his vision, he put in place a plan to study at McGill University with the help of the Ismail Association in Pakistan. After graduating in 1965, Nazarat decided to settle in Canada with his bride Parveen Peerwan who he married in Pakistan upon his graduation.

His willingness to relocate to the remote town of Cochrane, Ontario as a high school math and science teacher landed him a job and relatively high salary. The newlyweds settled in Cochrane for the next 11 years of their life where they had four children, Shaneela, Selmaan, Samina and Nousheen. The Shalwani family remained in Cochrane until 1976 when they moved to Toronto. Nazarat, currently at the age of 85, lives near the Ismail Centre, Toronto where he enjoys spending time with his brothers, sisters and eleven grandchildren.

Toronto: A happy home

Amiruddin (Amir) Gilani came to Toronto in 1970 from Mumbai (Bombay) with his brothers, Aladin and Ahmed, immigrating before him in the late 1960s. Aladin had a "pen pal" in Toronto for a very long time. He got a chance to immigrate to London, England in 1964 and, from there, his pen pal sponsored him.

Aladin did not know if there were any Ismailis living in Toronto at the time. One day, he was window shopping and saw a photo of Hazrat Imam. The shop was closed, so he wrote his name and phone number on a piece of paper and put it in the store. This is how he met the Ismaili Jamat.

There were only a handful of Ismailis living in Toronto and the small Jamat met every Sunday at Mukhi Jethwani's home. That was the Jamatkhana then. In 1971, there was a first big Navroz khushali (Persian New Year) in a rented church hall somewhere on Yonge Street. The Jamat enjoyed delicious home-made food and danced that night. For Amir, "This is how our life began in Toronto, Ontario, Canada."

“Whatever country you choose to live in, work for it, mix with its people, achieve its outlook. [...] In Africa, the day will come when the people of that vast continent will want to know who the foreigners are and it is the people who have made the country their home who are going to have the best opportunities in that country. I don't like the idea of calling yourselves Asians in Africa.” – Aga Khan III, 1951

“What we all had in common was [...] we bustled cheerfully along, stopping in clusters to gossip with our friends and relatives.” – Nazlin Rahemtulla

– – “Before Amin, Uganda had such a great government – the best civil service in Africa, the best health care. I'll tell you straight: at least Asians, by and large, we escaped. The Black Ugandans who stayed paid with their lives. It was a really troubling time.” – John Nazareth

“Uganda's Asian community had initially been relieved when Amin overthrew Milton Obote's civilian government in 1971, Switlo recalls. But the dark side to this new government became apparent to [Umeeda] Switlo's family when Amin set up a concentration camp directly opposite their home.” – Tara Carman, Vancouver Sun



Top: courtesy of Amina Mohamed's family and friends in Uganda.
Bottom: © Sarah H. Gorman, Uganda, in a report for the author's
Project: Amina Mohamed's Photography.



"Growing up, I always felt
that Uganda was home."
– Amina Mohamed







Uganda to oust British Asians

Uganda's new government has announced that it will expel all British Asians from the country within 90 days. The government says the Asians are a threat to the country's stability and are not in the best interests of the country.



The 1972 Ugandan expulsion of British Asians. The image shows a television set in a room, which was used to broadcast the news of the expulsion.

90 days to leave

"These Asians with British passports are sabotaging the economy of the country, and do not have the welfare of Uganda at heart [...] I want to see that the whole Kampala Street is not full of Indians." – Idi Amin

"At that time, it was a very horrific experience, but we made it." – Karmali Satari

"Vivid memories remain of that evening of August 5, 1972, when General Idi Amin Dada pushed the TV anchorman out of his chair and announced: "All British Asians numbering about 90,000 will have to be repatriated to Britain. They must leave within 90 days." – Sama Ngeer-Dang

"Contrary to Idi Amin's sweeping accusations about Asians, our family like many others, was loyal to Uganda. Idi Amin's dream is what God told her to get rid of the Asians became our nightmare." – Azeem Muzan

"There were lot of Ugandan citizens who had to go identify themselves and get their citizenship reviewed. Some of the soldiers who were checking destroyed their birth certificates and passports and made them stateless." – Man Khan

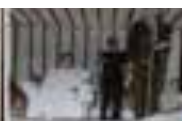
"Word soon got around that the country would not be safe for anyone who looked Asian, regardless of their citizenship. [...] For the African Ugandans who ran afraid of Amin, the story had no such happy ending." – Tara Camran

“Vivid memories remain of that evening of August 5, 1972, when General Idi Amin Dada pushed the TV anchorman out of his chair and announced: “All British Asians numbering about 80,000 will have to be repatriated to Britain. They must leave within 90 days.” – Salma Tejpar-Dang

“Contrary to Idi Amin’s sweeping accusations about Asians, our family like many others, was loyal to Uganda. Idi Amin’s dream in which God told him to get rid of the Asians became our nightmare.” – Azeem Motani

“There were lot of Ugandan citizens who had to go identify themselves and get their citizenship reviewed. Some of the soldiers who were checking destroyed their birth certificates and passports and made them stateless.” – Mani Khan

“Word soon got around that the country would not be safe for anyone who looked Asian, regardless of their citizenship. [...] For the African Ugandans who ran afoul of Amin, the story had no such happy ending.” – Tara Carman



... ..
... ..
... ..



Sharing the ageless cultures of India

From Expulsion to Refuge, Hope and Honour

Asian Migration: Since 1947, a significant part of the Indian population has been displaced. This includes the Partition of India, the migration of Muslims to India and Hindus to Pakistan, and the expulsion of the Indian population from the princely states of Jammu and Kashmir, Goa, and Pondicherry. The Indian diaspora has grown significantly, with millions of Indians living in other parts of the world.

Through their shared experiences, Indian diaspora communities have formed a global network. This network has facilitated the exchange of ideas, culture, and information, leading to a more interconnected world. The Indian diaspora has also played a significant role in the development of their host countries, contributing to their economic growth and cultural diversity.

Following the Partition, the Indian diaspora has grown significantly. This growth has been driven by a combination of factors, including the search for better economic opportunities, the desire for a more stable and secure environment, and the influence of global migration trends. The Indian diaspora has become a vital part of the global Indian community, contributing to the cultural and economic richness of the world.

The Indian diaspora has also played a significant role in the development of their host countries. Through their hard work and dedication, they have contributed to the economic growth and cultural diversity of their new homes. The Indian diaspora has become a bridge between India and the rest of the world, fostering a sense of global unity and shared purpose.

Asian Migration: Since 1947, a significant part of the Indian population has been displaced. This includes the Partition of India, the migration of Muslims to India and Hindus to Pakistan, and the expulsion of the Indian population from the princely states of Jammu and Kashmir, Goa, and Pondicherry. The Indian diaspora has grown significantly, with millions of Indians living in other parts of the world.

Through their shared experiences, Indian diaspora communities have formed a global network. This network has facilitated the exchange of ideas, culture, and information, leading to a more interconnected world. The Indian diaspora has also played a significant role in the development of their host countries, contributing to their economic growth and cultural diversity.

The Indian diaspora has also played a significant role in the development of their host countries. Through their hard work and dedication, they have contributed to the economic growth and cultural diversity of their new homes. The Indian diaspora has become a bridge between India and the rest of the world, fostering a sense of global unity and shared purpose.

The Indian diaspora has also played a significant role in the development of their host countries. Through their hard work and dedication, they have contributed to the economic growth and cultural diversity of their new homes. The Indian diaspora has become a bridge between India and the rest of the world, fostering a sense of global unity and shared purpose.



Azeem Motani: I was born in 1951 in Kampala. My family story in Uganda began in 1913 when my grandfather Pirbhai Laji Motani – born in 1895 in Vandaliya in Kathiawar, Gujarat – left India at the age of 18 and arrived in Gulu in Northern Uganda. My grandfather worked hard to achieve his successes and ventured into several different businesses, including textile and cotton ginneries in various towns in Northern Uganda and a flour mill in Kampala.

Following the Ugandan expulsion, I left for the UK, but subsequently decided to study in Canada as my parents had settled in Smiths Falls, Ontario. I reunited with them in December 1972 and we decided to settle in Ottawa where I enrolled in the Certified General Accountants (CGA) Study Program. Our first Jamatkhana was at a high school in downtown Ottawa.

Although dispossessed, arriving in Canada at age 52 with his entire life's possessions in one suitcase, my father, Abdulali P.L. Motani, remained a determined man who went on to become one of the top agents of a major Canadian life insurance company.

In October 1978, I received the T.H. Franking Gold Medal for attaining the highest average marks in Ontario in the final year National Certified General Accountants exams. I was chosen Class Valedictorian and during my Valedictory address, on a lighter note, I expressed thanks to Idi Amin: "If it was not for his very physically-moving expulsion order it is highly unlikely that I would have been masochistic enough to trade the warm and pleasant temperatures of Uganda for the long and cold winters of Canada."

Gary Sloatweg: This is a heart-warming story of two Indian classical dancers who first met in Vancouver in the 1970's. Aika Goel-Stevens was born in New Brunswick, Canada as the daughter of two Hindu parents, Devendra and Prem Goel, who came to Canada in 1952. Shelina Virani arrived from Uganda in 1972. Her Ismaili parents, Johnny and Roshan, were well-known business people in the Vancouver and owners of Roshan Saree Centre located in the Punjabi Market.

Aika, 17, and Shelina, 10, first met at the VHP Hindu Temple in Burnaby in 1974 where they came to learn India's oldest classical dance form called Bharata Natyam from the talented Ms. Nimmi Bai. As they got older, they continued their study of classical Indian dance, receiving certifications and travelling to India to learn from the masters.

The parents of both families worked tirelessly to instill the essential values of the Indian way of life – including the religions, dress, food, music, and dances of India – in their children. The four parents would soon become lifelong friends.

Wanting to give back, they started the Kavital Dance School of Bharata Natyam and Kathak in Burnaby in 1987. Today, the students there range from age 5 to 73 years old. Some of their former students are now teachers (Didis) of Indian classical dance. Aika and Shelina have succeeded in their goal to perpetuate the ancient dance styles of Bharata Natyam and Kathak, empowering others to discover the ageless culture of India.



© 2014 and 2015, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Elsewhere in Africa, "the writing was on the wall"

"Many hundreds of Ismailis from Tanzania – if not [more] – had already arrived and settled in Canada well before the Ugandan exodus in October 1972."

– Sadru Meghji

"Ismailis from French-speaking Zaire also left. Many, including my own family, settled in Quebec."

– Amin Jivraj

In April 1973, the Tanzanian government announced – pursuant to the 1967 Arusha Declaration – the imminent nationalization of banks, major businesses, insurance companies, farms, and schools. While "African" in Tanzania, many Malagasjar and Zairi were their explicitly "expelled" the stresses on their livelihoods and the rising anti-Asian sentiment prompted many to migrate proactively.

"So when they ask me, 'Where are you from?' or 'What are you?' I say, 'Listen, this is where my parents were. They have Indian ancestry. The Portuguese colonized Goa. Then they came to East Africa because of the British colonies, and that's where we were born. So we have Indian ancestry, mainly Portuguese with some Indian culture or background, Catholic-based religion and British upbringing. I explain it to them in that way.'" – Emil Francis

In April 1971, the Tanzanian government announced – pursuant to the 1967 Arusha Declaration – the imminent nationalization of banks, major businesses, insurance companies, farms, and schools. While “Asians” in Tanzania, Kenya, Madagascar and Zaire were never explicitly “expelled,” the stresses on their livelihoods and the rising anti-Asian sentiment prompted many to migrate proactively.

– –
“So when they ask me, ‘Where are you from,’ or, ‘What are you?’ I say, “Listen, this is where my parents were. They have Indian ancestry. The Portuguese colonized Goa. Then they came to East Africa because of the British colonies, and that’s where we were born. So we have Indian ancestry, mainly Portuguese with some Indian culture or background, Catholic-based religion and British upbringing. I explain it to them in that way.” – Errol Francis



1972

Service Client Linguistique Plurilingue - Centre de l'Éducation Bilingue
1972 - 1973 - 1974 - 1975 - 1976 - 1977 - 1978 - 1979 - 1980 - 1981 - 1982 - 1983 - 1984 - 1985 - 1986 - 1987 - 1988 - 1989 - 1990 - 1991 - 1992 - 1993 - 1994 - 1995 - 1996 - 1997 - 1998 - 1999 - 2000 - 2001 - 2002 - 2003 - 2004 - 2005 - 2006 - 2007 - 2008 - 2009 - 2010 - 2011 - 2012 - 2013 - 2014 - 2015 - 2016 - 2017 - 2018 - 2019 - 2020 - 2021 - 2022 - 2023 - 2024 - 2025 - 2026 - 2027 - 2028 - 2029 - 2030 - 2031 - 2032 - 2033 - 2034 - 2035 - 2036 - 2037 - 2038 - 2039 - 2040 - 2041 - 2042 - 2043 - 2044 - 2045 - 2046 - 2047 - 2048 - 2049 - 2050 - 2051 - 2052 - 2053 - 2054 - 2055 - 2056 - 2057 - 2058 - 2059 - 2060 - 2061 - 2062 - 2063 - 2064 - 2065 - 2066 - 2067 - 2068 - 2069 - 2070 - 2071 - 2072 - 2073 - 2074 - 2075 - 2076 - 2077 - 2078 - 2079 - 2080 - 2081 - 2082 - 2083 - 2084 - 2085 - 2086 - 2087 - 2088 - 2089 - 2090 - 2091 - 2092 - 2093 - 2094 - 2095 - 2096 - 2097 - 2098 - 2099 - 2100





"I arrived at Entebbe Airport in Uganda on September 5. [...] The office was a large space [that] had been vacant when Roger [St. Vincent, my boss, had] arrived a few days before. I had barely come through the door when I heard Roger shout from across the room, 'Hey Molloy! Did you come to look or to work?' He told me we were opening to the public the next morning, September 6. Then he handed me a hand-drawn floor plan [and] told me to get the office set up right away." – Michael Molloy, Canadian immigration official

"We lost our Ugandan citizenship and we lost our British rights, so we became stateless in Uganda. Canada said that whoever was stateless would be given first priority." – Aba Mohamed

"Our families are now split into 3 continents (Canada United Kingdom and Australia) after having left Uganda. [...] We are very fortunate to be a part of community that supported each other in this new environment as we all started off from scratch together." – Yasmin Allidina



The Summit Series was a high-stakes ice hockey series between Canada and the Soviet Union. It was the first time a non-NHL championship series took place outside of North America. The series was held in the Soviet Union from September 8-13, 1972. The Soviet Union won the series 4-3-2-1.

Michael Molloy tells "the hockey story"

Brian Muhammad: Michael Molloy was one of the Canadian immigration officials who assisted in the 1972 Asian expedition from Uganda. Working under the direction of Roger St. Vincent, Molloy was second-in-command at the Kenyatta office during the time of the expedition.

As the government refused from specifically identifying the exact number of Ugandan Asians that would be admitted into Canada, the legend asserts that the final number of 8,000 refugees is linked to the 1972 Summit Series.

[He explains that] Aga Khan's visit coincided with game seven of the 1972 Summit Series match between Canada and the Soviet Union. James Cross, a senior Canadian government official, hosted the Aga Khan at lunch at the Governor General's estate with four colleagues. At the lunch, they inquired from the match officials if they could subtly communicate the score to the Canadian representatives during the lunch (with Russia's score on his left hand and Canada's score on his right).

As Michael Molloy recalled, since the Canadians had lost the game at times, the Aga Khan asked a very pertinent question:

Michael Molloy: So at a certain stage, with the score [3-2], the cumulative score comes up to six points, and [my opinion] and I have gone through the game and we've got it written down... the Aga Khan says, "so tell me, Mr. Cross, how many are you going to admit?" And it's at that minute that the match [I flash] 6 fingers from the dome. And Cross, as far as I can tell, he's very excited, and puts 6 fingers on that table and looks at his friends [to signal the score]. And the Aga Khan looks at the fingers and he says, "you mean 8,000? That's splendid, well, of course."

The events described in the "hockey story" coincided with the change in cabinet documents in early October 1972 which specified the numerical limit being increased to 8,000. Furthermore, Roger St. Vincent verified a similar account of events at York University during the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations of the Ugandan Asian refugee resettlement in Canada.



Shezan Muhammedi: Michael Molloy was one of the Canadian immigration officials who assisted in the 1972 Asian expulsion from Uganda. Working under the direction of Roger St. Vincent, Molloy was second-in-command at the Kampala office during the time of the expulsion.

As the government refrained from specifically identifying the exact number of Ugandan Asians that would be admitted into Canada, the legend asserts that the final number of 6,000 refugees is linked to the 1972 Summit Series.

[His Highness the] Aga Khan's visit coincided with game seven of the 1972 Summit Series match between Canada and the Soviet Union.

James Cross, a senior Canadian government official, hosted the Aga Khan at lunch at the Governor General's estate with four colleagues. At the lunch, they inquired from the maître d'hôtel if they could subtly communicate the score to the Canadian representatives during the lunch [with Russia's score on his left hand and Canada's score on his right].

As Michael Molloy recalled, once the Canadians had tied the game at three, the Aga Khan asked a very pertinent question:

Michael Molloy: So at a certain stage, with the score [3-3], the cumulative score comes up to six points, and [my spouse] and I have gone through the game and we've got it written down ... the Aga Khan says, 'so tell me, Mr. Cross, how many are you going to admit?' And it's at that minute that the maître-D flashes 6 fingers from the door. And Cross, as far as I can tell, he's very excited, and puts 6 fingers on that table and looks at his friends [to signal the score]. And the Aga Khan looks at the fingers and he says, 'you mean 6,000? That's splendid, well, of course.'

The events described in the 'hockey story' coincided with the change in cabinet documents in early October 1972 which specified the numerical limit being increased to 6,000. Furthermore, Roger St. Vincent verified a similar account of events at York University during the twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations of the Ugandan Asian refugee resettlement in Canada.



Left: Arrival of refugees at Uganda's Fort Portal, 1972. Middle: The Uganda Export Development Corporation (UEDC) building, Kampala, Uganda, 1960s. Right: The Uganda Export Development Corporation (UEDC) building, Kampala, Uganda, 1960s. Bottom: The Uganda Export Development Corporation (UEDC) building, Kampala, Uganda, 1960s.

The diversity of "Ugandan Asians"

"Even when the term 'Asian' was used by mid-century researchers, it was deployed begrudgingly [with] a caveat that it was very difficult to group these diverse communities together in the first place." – Taushif Kara

"There were significant Asian communities in Uganda. These included Gujarati Hindus (30 percent) and Somali Muslims (30 percent), as well as smaller communities of Sikhs, Goans, Punjabi Hindus, Christians, Bani, and Parsis." – Michael Molloy, Canadian immigration official

"The small community used to have sport competitions with the Hindus, or the Sikh community, or the Punjabis, all of South Asian background – essentially all friends." – Bashir Latif

"We had Hindu people working there [at the export company Liverpool Uganda] and they treated me like their daughter." – Amina Latif

"It was important I capture this history that showed what the community had nurtured through the years with connections from Goa over generations in Uganda. Our [family's] ties to Uganda date back to around 1827." – Tina Achale

“There were significant Asian communities in Uganda. These included Gujarati Hindus (50 percent) and Ismaili Muslims (30 percent), as well as smaller communities of Sikhs, Goans, Punjabi Hindus, Ithnasharis, Boas, and Parsis.” – Michael Molloy, Canadian immigration official

“The Ismaili community used to have sport competitions with the Hindus, or the Sikh community, or the Punjabis, all of South Asian background – essentially all friends.”

– Bashir Lalani

“We had Hindu people working there [at the export company Liverpool Uganda] and they treated me like their daughter.” – Azina Lalani

“It was important I capture this history that showed what the community had nurtured through the years with connections from Goa over generations in Uganda. Our [family’s] ties to Uganda date back to around 1927.” – Tina Athaide



YOUNGEST BROTHER in Canada with parents El and Mrs. Abdullah Ibrahim, who arrived in Victoria tonight from Edmonton, Alberta, night. (Citizen photo by Alan ...)

Refugee family in P.O.

Youngest Ugandan here

By Alan ...

The youngest brother of a Ugandan family has arrived in Canada with his parents, El and Mrs. Abdullah Ibrahim, who arrived in Victoria tonight from Edmonton, Alberta, night.

The family arrived in Canada last week and is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

now hear this . . .

See An article published in the Prince George Citizen in British Columbia titled "Youngest Ugandan here" features a partial reprint of an article published last July after this British-born, African Ugandan, youngest Ugandan of his age." Substituted by Western Canadian Cities. This article, "The youngest brother of a Ugandan family has arrived in Canada with his parents, El and Mrs. Abdullah Ibrahim, who arrived in Victoria tonight from Edmonton, Alberta, night." See the original article in the Prince George Citizen.

ONE YEAR IN PRINCE GEORGE

Ugandans discover peace of mind

By Alan ...

The Ugandan family has found a new home in Prince George, British Columbia. The family, consisting of El and Mrs. Abdullah Ibrahim and their youngest brother, El, arrived in Victoria last night from Edmonton, Alberta. The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.



ABUNDANT SNOW in a new home in Prince George.

The Citizen

The Citizen is a newspaper published in Prince George, British Columbia. It covers local news, sports, and community events. The article about the Ugandan family is one of the many stories it publishes.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.

The family is now in the care of the Immigration Department. The youngest brother, El, is the youngest of three children.





1978

Howling Hopes: Inauguration for
First Journal Week in Canada





Ismael, M. Ismail, in 1971 (seated in the middle) with his family. Ismael Ismail, along with his brother, Zairi Ismail, "helped" Ismael Ismail's legal team, "the only reason he got into the United States was through my brother's attorney." The Ismail family is made up of Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail.

Zairi's Ismailis

Zairi Ismail, along with his brother, Ismael Ismail, "helped" Ismael Ismail's legal team, "the only reason he got into the United States was through my brother's attorney." The Ismail family is made up of Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail.

Ismael Ismail, along with his brother, Ismael Ismail, "helped" Ismael Ismail's legal team, "the only reason he got into the United States was through my brother's attorney." The Ismail family is made up of Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail.

Ismael Ismail, along with his brother, Ismael Ismail, "helped" Ismael Ismail's legal team, "the only reason he got into the United States was through my brother's attorney." The Ismail family is made up of Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail.



Mapping the resettlement

Ismael Ismail, along with his brother, Ismael Ismail, "helped" Ismael Ismail's legal team, "the only reason he got into the United States was through my brother's attorney." The Ismail family is made up of Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail.



The dream is possible

Ismael Ismail, along with his brother, Ismael Ismail, "helped" Ismael Ismail's legal team, "the only reason he got into the United States was through my brother's attorney." The Ismail family is made up of Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail.

Ismael Ismail, along with his brother, Ismael Ismail, "helped" Ismael Ismail's legal team, "the only reason he got into the United States was through my brother's attorney." The Ismail family is made up of Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail, Ismael Ismail.



Zaire's Ismailis

Amin Aladin Jivraj: In 1973, in the former Zaire in Central Africa (now, Democratic Republic of the Congo), the government under President Mobutu introduced a form of "disguised nationalization" of business and immovable assets of peoples it considered as "foreigners" (which included Ismailis), canceling their trade licenses. Known in French as "Remise - Reprise," this meant that foreigners were forced to "hand over" their businesses to certain local individuals selected by the government without any form of compensation. While the government did not expel the foreigners like in Uganda, we saw no future for ourselves under the circumstances. Based on advice received from their institutions, Ismailis left with the majority resettling in Canada.

Many, including my own family, settled in Quebec, which was seen as a place that would allow an easy transition and integration based on our knowledge of French as Zaire's official language. The settlement process went smoothly with many members of the Jamat finding jobs. I, for one, benefited greatly being the first in the family to complete a university education in 1981.

After a short stay in Montreal, the family settled on the south shore in Longueuil where I, along with my younger brother and sister, went to public schools. We are so fortunate and grateful to Canada.

Malika Latha: Jahangir Hassanpoor remembers how when he first arrived in Canada, his friend's mother had asked him to purchase ten pounds of potatoes. He returned with ten pounds of tomatoes. Hassanpoor laughs, recalling his struggle with the new language. Born and raised in Mashhad, Iran, it was there that Hassanpoor first met Tanzanian Ismaili students who were studying medicine at Pahlavi University. Hassanpoor was 16 at the time of the 1979 revolution which was followed by the eight-year Iran-Iraq war. After two years in the army, "It felt like there was no hope, no future," he says. "I was at an adventurous age so I decided to leave the country."

Hassanpoor embarked on a risky solo journey to Pakistan in 1983 and was en route to Canada within three months. "Since I knew [the Ismaili medical students], I felt I had a connection to make a home in Canada." Once he had acquired refugee status, Mirshahi and other Iranian Ismailis were sponsored by Ismailis in Canada. Settling in Montreal, he balanced a full-time job with learning English as a second language and completing high school. When Hassanpoor's family in Mashhad received a letter with a picture of Jahangir at Niagara Falls, they shared it with his 17-year-old cousin, Amir Reza Mirshahi. "Jahangir showed me that the dream is possible."



Members make their mark with the Canadian spirit during his 10th Jubilee (2002) and his Golden Jubilee (2007), celebrating 50th and 75th anniversaries of his nation. The visits reflect dynamic and growing relationships with the Government of Canada, resulting in strengthened ties, more jobs in Canada and positive contributions to local political and economic progress of the country.



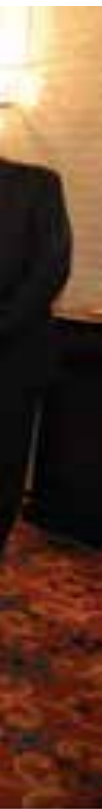


Photo: From the left -
Rajeev, Arun, Anand





Our journey upstream

In 2014, the Government of Ontario and the Province of Ontario announced a joint initiative to support the development of a new generation of entrepreneurs and innovators. The program, known as the Ontario Entrepreneurship and Innovation Fund (OEIIF), was designed to provide financial support to entrepreneurs and innovators. The program is a key part of the province's strategy to create jobs and drive economic growth.

I immigrated to Canada to pursue my dreams

When I came to Canada, I was looking for a better life. I had heard that Canada was a great place to live, and I wanted to see if it was true. I had heard that Canada was a great place to live, and I wanted to see if it was true. I had heard that Canada was a great place to live, and I wanted to see if it was true.

When I came to Canada, I was looking for a better life. I had heard that Canada was a great place to live, and I wanted to see if it was true. I had heard that Canada was a great place to live, and I wanted to see if it was true. I had heard that Canada was a great place to live, and I wanted to see if it was true.



Unpacking our Somali Canadian identity

As a Somali Canadian, I have a unique perspective on my identity. I have grown up in Canada, but I still have a strong connection to my roots. I have grown up in Canada, but I still have a strong connection to my roots. I have grown up in Canada, but I still have a strong connection to my roots.



"The elephant inspires us to persevere."
— Narmin Kassam

"Dear Canada: You paved the way to a better future. Je vous en remercie!" — Ziaulhaq Amiri

Aleem's Elephant

The story of Aleem's Elephant is a true story of perseverance. It is a story of a young boy who was born in a small village in India. He was born in a small village in India. He was born in a small village in India. He was born in a small village in India.



I immigrated to Canada to pursue my dreams

Ziaulhaq Amiri: Leaving my home country, Afghanistan, at an early age was not an easy decision, but the most important one. As a young refugee holding nothing but a pen, I now had to work in physically-demanding jobs under extreme conditions. I am grateful for those experiences that taught me life skills and made my life adventurous. Deep down in my heart, I knew all these struggles would eventually come to an end, and they did when I immigrated to Canada to pursue my dreams.

After a year of struggle in a foreign country (Pakistan), I arrived in Sherbrooke, Quebec. Relocating to a new country exacerbated the challenges associated with adjusting and adapting to new norms and customs while preserving our ancestral culture. My academic career had to be relaunched. I returned to high school in order to excel in college, then attended university. Now, I'm enrolled in the Institute of Islamic Studies. As a youth mentor for the Canadian Council for Refugees (Youth Network), **I have decided to give back what this beautiful country has given: a second chance to rebuild the future that I was unable to envision in Afghanistan.** I'm immensely grateful to my family for the provided support, unwavering love, and trust.

Aleem's Elephant

This acrylic painting by Namin Kassam is titled "Aleem's Elephant," dedicated to the artist's son to mark his birth. Painted in an impressionist style with the colours of the African landscape, the elephant pays tribute to the artist's Indian and African roots. As an animal of peace, the elephant is neither prey nor predator. The strength, stability and honour represented by this majestic mammal with its large footprint remind us of our ancestors' efforts to empower their community and aspire toward continuous movement. The elephant always remembers its past, yet walks toward the future.



Unpacking our Ismaili Canadian identity

As this past year's artist-in-residence at the Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, Aquil Virani (aquil.ca) is an award-winning visual artist, graphic designer and filmmaker. This suitcase painting, part of a larger series funded by the Ontario Arts Council, depicts an Ismaili man from Tanzania, overlooking a romanticized "Canadian landscape."



Our journey upstream

In 2021, 36 families from the Ottawa and Kingston Ismail community created a mural that depicts fish swimming upstream, representing the Ismail community's past and ongoing journey to and in Canada. The mural, entitled "Journey Upstream," was presented to Generations, a long-term care facility in Calgary that houses an early childhood development centre to encourage intergenerational interactions. The mural was inspired by a gift of a jade salmon carving Canadian binalis gave to His Highness the Aga Khan in 1978.



**"The elephant
inspires us to
persevere."
– Narmin Kassam**



The women's dancing performance, "The Queen's Face of Afghanistan," at the National Museum of Science and Technology, National House of Culture, organized by a group of women from Afghanistan who arrived in the Great Lakes.

We are Afghan and Canadian too

« Je suis fière d'être afghane. Je suis fière d'être canadienne-québécoise. »
– Benafsha Amiri

"I am grateful for the unity, support and kindness of the global Ismaili community."
– Ayub Nazari

"My father decided that we would go to Pakistan [first]. It was not easy because the infrastructure was not there. Any means of travelling was improvised. There were a lot of challenges. People were being robbed on their way. People were being helped by strangers. We had to ask ourselves: "Who do you trust?" – Mansur Qaderi

"In September 1992, the Government of Quebec and the Ismaili Council signed a unique protocol agreement which laid the foundation for the collaborative work that resulted in the settlement and integration of the first 350 Afghan Ismaili refugees." – CTV News

"When we left Qandahar, we walked through mountains for 17 days to finally reach Pakistan. [...] A person who leaves their own country to come to another country will obviously have tensions." – Basim Shah Qaderi

« O Allah! Le plus clément / Le plus miséricordieux / Le vainqueur du jugement dernier / Où se trouvent mes étoiles / Où se trouvent des vies / Là ton côté des choses. » – Sami Habib (une fille afghane de 12 ans à Montréal, Québec en 1999)

“My father decided that we would go to Pakistan [first]. It was not easy because the infrastructure was not there. Any means of travelling was improvised. There were a lot of challenges. People were being robbed on their way. People were being helped by strangers. We had to ask ourselves: ‘Who do you trust?’” – Mansur Qaderi

“In September 1992, the Government of Quebec and the Ismaili Council signed a unique protocol agreement which laid the foundation for the collaborative work that resulted in the settlement and integration of the first 350 Afghan Ismaili refugees.” – CTV News

– – “When we left Qundoz, we walked through mountains for 17 days to finally reach Pakistan. [...] A person who leaves their own country to come to another country will obviously have tensions.”
– Bozorg Shah Qaderi

« O Allah! Le plus clément / Le plus miséricordieux / Le seigneur du jugement dernier / Votre lumière nous éclaire / Nous permet de voir / Le bon côté des choses. » – Barin Habibi (une fille afghane de 12 ans à Sherbrooke, Québec en 1999)



It started with a package of soap "made in Canada"

Paul's Story: Paul's journey began in 1992 when he was 17 years old and came to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. He was a student leader and a member of the Student Union. He was also a member of the Student Union and a member of the Student Union.

Paul's journey began in 1992 when he was 17 years old and came to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. He was a student leader and a member of the Student Union. He was also a member of the Student Union and a member of the Student Union.

Paul's journey began in 1992 when he was 17 years old and came to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. He was a student leader and a member of the Student Union. He was also a member of the Student Union and a member of the Student Union.

Paul's journey began in 1992 when he was 17 years old and came to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. He was a student leader and a member of the Student Union. He was also a member of the Student Union and a member of the Student Union.



The land of opportunities

Paul's Story: Paul's journey began in 1992 when he was 17 years old and came to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. He was a student leader and a member of the Student Union. He was also a member of the Student Union and a member of the Student Union.

Paul's journey began in 1992 when he was 17 years old and came to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. He was a student leader and a member of the Student Union. He was also a member of the Student Union and a member of the Student Union.

Paul's journey began in 1992 when he was 17 years old and came to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. He was a student leader and a member of the Student Union. He was also a member of the Student Union and a member of the Student Union.

Paul's journey began in 1992 when he was 17 years old and came to Canada to study at the University of Toronto. He was a student leader and a member of the Student Union. He was also a member of the Student Union and a member of the Student Union.

"After everything he's been through, 'proud' is just a small word. I'm more than 'proud' of him." – Diyala, Fady's sister



Fady Almessyaty: My name is Fady Almessyaty, and I am a Syrian Ismaili. My family is rooted in Salamieh and migrated to the cities Damascus, Aleppo, and Homs in the 1960s because of the severe drought and lack of livelihood opportunities.

After the war erupted in Syria in 2011, most Ismailis experienced deep difficulties with regards to their safety, financial situation, and being able to access health care and education. In Damascus, I lost my house and job in 2012, and Salamieh was the best shelter that we could seek. Fortunately, my parents had already moved there following their retirement, and I joined them when I lost my house. Then I left the country with my wife and daughter with a clear plan to migrate to a safe place and build a peaceful life.

Our journey to Canada started with Lebanon, then UAE, and then Jordan with difficulties faced throughout in obtaining work permits and business visas.

Settling in Canada was very challenging and required clear planning, hard work and dedication. I started as a general worker at a grocery store and, at the same time, I applied for a master's degree at McGill University. I obtained my degree in 2019 and started a job as a business analyst with TD. Canada is our new home and it is the land of opportunities.

Ayub Nazari fled from war-torn Afghanistan in 1994 with his entire family, parents, 6 brothers, one sister and their families, making a dangerous trip across the border to Rawalpindi, Pakistan from Kabul during a short-lived ceasefire. It was difficult emotionally for Ayub to leave a country where his ancestors had helped build the first Jamatkhana in Kabul.

Giving back to the Ismaili community through seva was a core value for Ayub. As a second-degree black belt, he started a youth Taekwondo club where he offered free classes to local children on the rooftop of his apartment building.

His discovery of Canada came by chance; as his English improved, he read the packaging on a bar of soap one day which indicated "Made in Canada." He quickly learned about this country – Ismailis were living there too! He made it his dream to immigrate to Canada for a better life. Along with his family's application to immigrate, he volunteered full-time for nearly 2 months to help 43 other Ismaili families do the same. He insisted he would not leave for Canada until everyone was approved and he kept true to his word.

In December 2000, Ayub, his wife, son, daughter and extended family, arrived in Edmonton, Alberta.



2014

Minister of Health unveils address to Parliament in the presence of Prime Minister Harper in 2014



Michael
Murray



The Honors class each received an honorary degree from the University of British Columbia, the University of Alberta, the University of Regina, Western University, the Faculty of Education, the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Ottawa, York University, and Simon Fraser University.



“I came from Salamieh, Syria. I studied elementary and secondary school in Homes. I went to Damascus for university, but I stopped my studies because of difficult war conditions.”
– Ghenwa Masyati

“I came to Canada in 2016 fleeing the war in Syria. I am proud to say I am becoming a Canadian citizen this year. There was no future in Syria and it was no longer safe for my children to grow up in. My family made Saskatoon our home, after I obtained work as a researcher at the University of Saskatoon with my academic PhD background in Food Processing and Biotechnology. [...] **Canada is a place of inclusivity and acceptance of all cultures.**”
- Dr. Rana Mustafa

“Because I already had a couple of cousins and some friends in Edmonton, I settled there. Although I had worked with international companies in Saudi, my work experience was not recognized in Canada initially. I had to start again from the bottom and rebuild my way up. I am Syrian. And I am Canadian. And I am proud to be both.” – Mazen Kasim



*Canada was now
my new home*

Dr. Sheila Hirani, a highly accomplished physician and leader in her field, moved to Canada in 2012. In that time, she has not only established a successful medical practice but also found a new home. Her journey from a medical professional to a community leader in Canada is a testament to the resilience and adaptability of immigrants.

Dr. Hirani's story is one of many that illustrate the success of immigrants in Canada. She has not only found a new home but also a new career path, demonstrating the opportunities available to newcomers in this country.



*This passion of mine
brought me to Canada*

Dr. Sheila Hirani, a highly accomplished physician and leader in her field, moved to Canada in 2012. In that time, she has not only established a successful medical practice but also found a new home. Her journey from a medical professional to a community leader in Canada is a testament to the resilience and adaptability of immigrants.

Dr. Hirani's story is one of many that illustrate the success of immigrants in Canada. She has not only found a new home but also a new career path, demonstrating the opportunities available to newcomers in this country.

"I am proud to call Canada my home." – Dr. Sheila Hirani

"There are many ways to be resilient, no matter what age you are." – Karmali Satani



An Ode for Mrs. Satani

An ode to a woman of resilience and strength, Mrs. Satani's journey is a testament to the power of perseverance. Her story is one of many that inspire and uplift the community.



Dr. Sheila Hiranli: I migrated to Canada from Pakistan in 2015. Being a nurse-academician, lactation consultant and researcher, I came to Canada to pursue my PhD in Nursing from the University of Alberta, studying "Breastfeeding barriers and facilitators of mothers living in disaster relief camps in Pakistan". I want to make a difference in the lives of displaced women. During my doctoral studies I travelled to Chitral, Pakistan where natural disasters were ongoing and many families were displaced. I undertook my research in collaboration with the Aga Khan Agency for Habitat,

Pakistan (formerly known as Focus Pakistan). In Canada, my doctoral work was supported by the Government of Canada's Vanier Graduate Doctoral Award, Izaak and Dorothy Killam Award, Aga Khan Foundation-ISP Award, International Development Research Centre research award, and various other university-based awards.

Since 2019, I have worked as an Associate Professor at the University of Regina. I am a proud Ismaili and I am proud to call Canada my home.

*Canada was now
my new home*

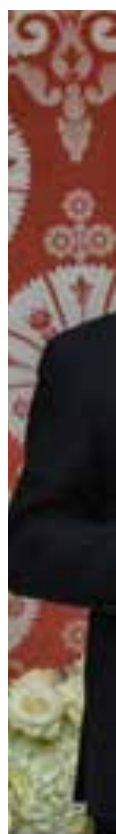
Karmali Valibhai Satani: My family and I – all 6 of us – arrived in Canada on October 22, 1972. At that time, [Idi Amin's expulsion] was a very horrific experience, but we made it! This was the first taste of a cold harsh winter compared to the mild weather of Uganda where I had lived for 20 years as a teacher. Canada was now my new home, so I decided to face it and brave the cold.

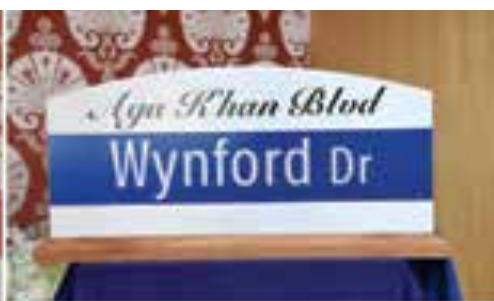
I am originally from India, then moved to Pakistan, thereafter to Uganda, and finally to Canada. After my job search for about a year, on September 1, 1973, I secured a job with the Aga Khan Council for Ontario as Administrative Officer, where I worked until my retirement in Toronto.

There are many ways to be resilient, no matter what age you are. As for me, I am always ready to offer my seva, to serve our community, to work hard, to be sincere, and to share smiles with friends and family.



2018
Marking a year of progress, the Canadian Investment Agency launched a series of initiatives in the first half of 2017, centered around the 2018 Canadian Economic Policy Statement, including publishing the study on the 10 Emerging-Market Investment Opportunities in the Global South, and the continued high quality of the 100 Emerging Markets Index.





2022

Below: Anwar Aga Khan, Princess Zahra Aga Khan and Prince Rahim Aga Khan attend several events across Canada in 2022 in honour of Mawlana Hazrat Imam, marking 50 years of the significant presence of the Ismaili Muslim community in Canada.

Top: Toronto Mayor John Tory dedicates the way to the City of Mississauga Hazel McCall and a portion of Wynford Drive is ceremoniously named Aga Khan Boulevard.

Middle: A groundbreaking ceremony for Generations Toronto is attended by Toronto Mayor John Tory, Prince Anwar Aga Khan and Ontario Premier Doug Ford, among others.

Bottom Left: Inauguration of the Dewar Pavilion at the Aga Khan Garden Toronto at the University of Alberta. Garden presented over by a statement Governor, Louise Lablanc, Alberta Premier Jason Kenney and University of Alberta President, Bill Paragary.

Bottom Right: The Ismaili Imam and the Princess of British Columbia sign an Agreement of Corporate Sponsorship concerning to advance joint efforts for development work in B.C. and around the world.





Left and top: The faces of the Iqbalpur school community from my area of Iqbalpur, near Lahore. Middle right: An Iqbalpur school student's proud display of a gold medal earned in a national-level competition. Top right: A group of Iqbalpur school students in traditional attire.

Ismailis in Canada: A global constellation

"Ultimately, a community's history is made of all these stories – the individual and the familial, the told and the untold." – Rizwan Mawani

**"I'm happy to live here. I'm proud to be Tajik-Canadian."
– Shamsiya Hamir**

**"One of the first recorded Ismailis to arrive in Canada was Safar Ali Ismaili from Pakistan, who arrived in 1952 with one suitcase and \$100!"
– Uzma Rajan and Farah Merchant-Welsh**

"Il était tout-à-fait normale de m'installer au Québec, parce que quand je suis arrivé au Canada (je suis Belge), je ne parlais pas l'anglais. In Québec, you could easily find jobs if you only spoke French." – Mobina Fakhrani

"Many Ismaili immigrants settled in the Prairies. Many had no idea where they were headed; they were told by Immigration Canada that these smaller cities offered plentiful jobs and a lower cost of living." – Farzana Logan

"I originally come from Aden, Yemen. My aunt Hazrat Imam visited the Aden Jamat in 1957. Since there was no established Jamat there, the visit happened at the airport. It is important to us as a global Jamat should be made aware that the Imam's murids (followers) are all over this globe. I migrated with my parents in 1983 and settled in Calgary, Alberta." – Anar Jannohamed

“One of the first recorded Ismailis to arrive in Canada was Safar Ali Ismaily from Pakistan, who arrived in 1952 with one suitcase and \$100.”

– Uzma Rajan and Farah Merchant-Vellani

« Il était toute-à-fait normale de m’installer au Quebec parce que quand je suis arrivé au Canada [de Belgique], je ne parlais pas l’anglais. In Quebec, you could easily find jobs if you only spoke French. » – Mobina Fakhirani

“Many Ismaili immigrants settled in the Prairies. Many had no idea where they were headed; they were told by Immigration Canada that these smaller cities offered plentiful jobs and a lower cost of living.” – Farzana Logan

“I originally come from Aden, Yemen. Mawlana Hazar Imam visited the Aden Jamat in 1957. Since there was no established Jamatkhana, the visit happened at the airport. **It is important we as a global Jamat should be made aware that the Imam’s murids (followers) are all over this globe.** I migrated with my parents in 1981 and settled in Calgary, Alberta.” – Anar Janmohamed

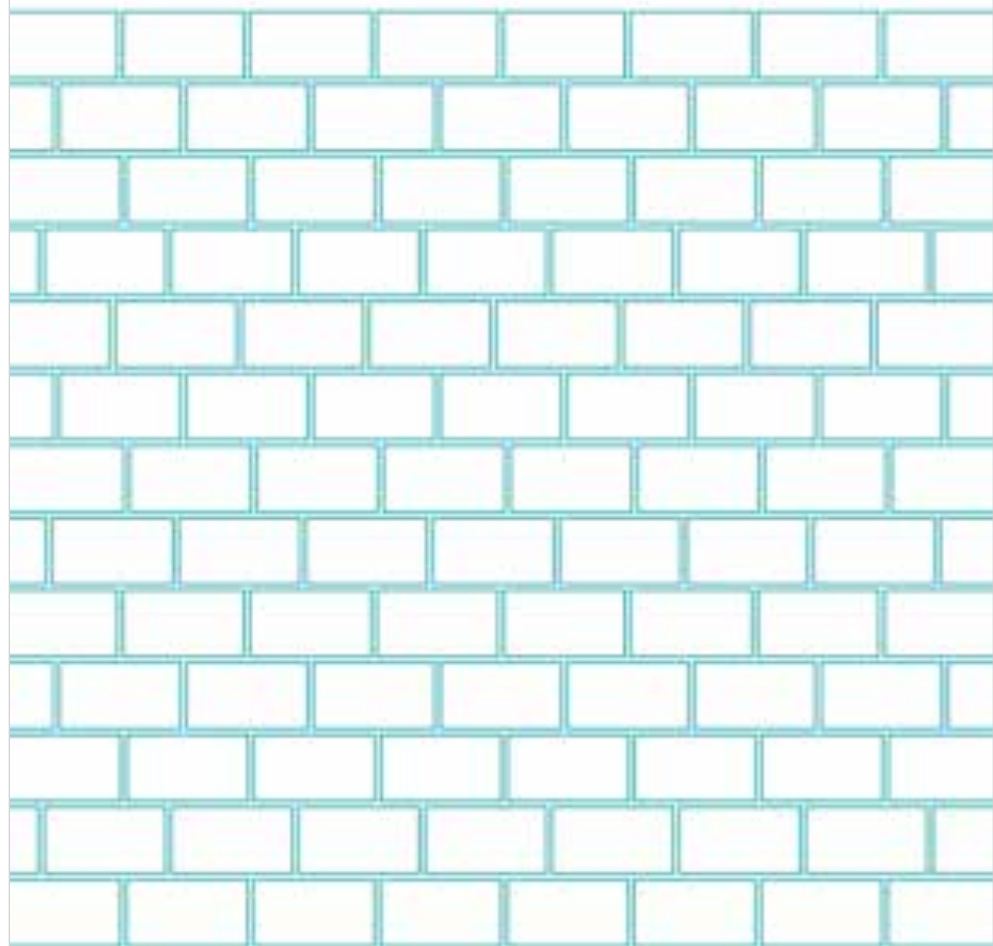


Tajikistan, Switzerland, Mozambique, and then Canada!

Shamsiya MH: My name is Shamsiya and I'm originally from Tajikistan. I have been in Canada for just under a decade. I am from the Badakshan region. My journey has led me to three different continents – from Tajikistan to Geneva, Switzerland, then to Maputo, Mozambique, and finally to Canada. I speak Pamir, Tajik, Russian and French as well as a bit of Portuguese from my time in Mozambique. In Tajikistan, I was trained as a medical doctor, but when I moved to Europe in my twenties, I decided not to pursue further certification in medicine. I work now as a program manager at a community health centre in Ottawa, managing a team of over 20 staff. My parents are very proud of what I've achieved. I am proud to be Canadian, but I want to make sure I maintain my connection to Tajikistan – for me and for my daughter. It's important that she continues to understand my culture and my roots.

ACTIVITY: WRITE ON A STICKER

*What dreams do
you have for the
Jamat in 50 years?*



Acknowledgements



April Vroman (Exhibition Director) April Vroman is a award-winning visual artist, graphic designer and filmmaker, newly based in Toronto. In the past year's work as assistant of the Canadian Museum of Immigration, he work has been supported financially by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Government of Canada via Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council, the City of Ottawa, the Bill Reid Institute, and the Myrlande Sam Foundation among others. He likes to think of other things, neither Dominique Aurio-Nardi, Ulrich Aigner (Burg), and his community in Surrey BC, for seeing his work here about his work spread all over the

Special Thanks to: Todd Stewart (Oswego), Noémie Karam (Lugojica, Romania), Samir Kassam (Ottawa), Bahram (Ottawa), Shamus Kassem (Whitford Printing, Vancouver), Samir Jang (Oswego, J.C. Montreal), Faram Jang (Oswego), Shekar Mohamed, Tashif-Gang, Arina Mohamed, Photography (Oswego), Hani Images, Gauri Vasant, Gulzar Farooq, the Team Zivar (Oswego Family Collection), Omar Farooq, Fawaz Rahmani, Tawseem Farooq, Pooja Raj, Heather Laroche and the Carleton University (Oswego), Catherine, the Library and Archives of Canada (Oswego), past officers and officers of The Royal Canadian Air Force (Oswego) who have set up the exhibition, all of the community members who submitted their stories and the many donors and the their Stearns Luminaria members who helped in doing the way.



We acknowledge the sacred lands on which we live and the treaties that govern these territories. Our exhibition team members continue to work in Ottawa, on the unceded territory of the Agamiwini Anishinabe, in Toronto on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishinabe, the Ojibwa, the Haudenosaunee and the Shawnee among many nations, on the unceded traditional territories of the Anishinabe, Mississaugas, Shawnee, Ojibwa, and others (their traditional territories).

We also acknowledge that there are two early important stories in our community to tell of these people. We may not see your name printed in this photo of your grandchild among these people, but please know that this is your story. All opinions expressed by the exhibition team and project participants do not necessarily reflect the views of the Agamiwini Anishinabe. We also acknowledge funding support from the Ontario Arts Council, in support of the Government of Ontario, for work of the exhibition on the territory.

Aquil Virani (Exhibition Director): Aquil Virani is an award-winning visual artist, graphic designer and filmmaker, newly based in Toronto. As this past year's artist-in-residence at the Canadian Museum of Immigration, his work has been supported financially by the Canada Council for the Arts, the Government of Canada, the Ontario Arts Council, the Toronto Arts Council, the City of Ottawa, the Silk Road Institute, and the Michaelle Jean Foundation among others. He'd like to thank his father Shiraz, mother Dominique, Auntie Navin, Uncle Alnoor (Bunju), and his community in Surrey, BC, for raising him. Learn more about his work online at aquil.ca.

Special thanks to: Malik Merchant (Simerg), Noordin Karmali (Logistics, Vancouver), Narmin Kassam (Creative Advisor, Ottawa), Shenaz Kassam (Westwood Printing, Vancouver), Karim Jeraj (Groupe JKC, Montreal), Farah Jivraj Khamis, Shezan Muhammedi, Taushif Kara, Amina Mohamed Photography, Muslim Harji Images, Dolar Vasani, Salina Kassam, the Vazir Zinat Virani Family Collection, Omar Sachedina, Fawzia Ratanshi, Tasneem Premji, Pragna Hay, Heather Leroux and the Carleton University Uganda Collection, the Library and Archives of Canada (LAC), past writers and editors of The Ismaili Canada, **all of the local volunteers who have set up the exhibition, all of the community members who submitted their stories and the many helpers and 50-Year Steering Committee members who chipped in along the way.**

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

We acknowledge the unceded lands on which we live and the treaties that govern these territories. Our exhibition team members currently live in Ottawa, on the unceded territory of the Algonquin Anishinaabe, in Toronto, on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples, and in Vancouver, on the unceded traditional territories of the xʷməθkʷəy̓əm (Musqueam), Sḵwxwú7mesh (Squamish), and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations.

We also acknowledge that there are too many important stories in our community to fit on these panels. You may not see your name printed or find a photo of your grandmother among these panels, but please know that this is your story. **All opinions expressed by the exhibition team and project participants do not necessarily reflect the views of the Aga Khan Council for Canada or any other affiliated institutions. We also would like to acknowledge funding support from the Ontario Arts Council, an agency of the Government of Ontario, for some of the artworks included in this exhibition.**

KIDS EXHIBITION PANELS

WELCOME, KIDS!

*Please remember
these rules:*



**Walk
(do not run)**



**Avoid touching
the panels**



**Speak softly
(do not shout)**



**Ask an adult if you
have a question**



Have fun learning!

QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

*Can you point
out the countries
listed below
on the map?*



AFGHANISTAN - AUSTRALIA -
BANGLADESH - **CANADA** -
DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF THE
CONGO (ZAIRE) - DENMARK -
FRANCE - GERMANY - INDIA -
IRAN - KENYA - MADAGASCAR -
MYANMAR (BURMA) - PAKISTAN -
PORTUGAL - SYRIA - TAJIKISTAN -
TANZANIA - UGANDA - UNITED
KINGDOM - UNITED STATES OF
AMERICA - YEMEN

QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

What would you pack in a suitcase if you had to move?



**CLOTHES? • TOOTHBRUSH? •
TASBEH? • TOYS? • BOOKS? •
FAMILY PHOTOS? • WHAT ELSE?**

QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

Do you know who in your family immigrated to Canada?



**WAS IT YOUR MOTHER? FATHER?
SISTER? BROTHER? YOUR AUNT?
UNCLE? YOUR GRANDMOTHER?
YOUR GREAT GRANDFATHER?**

**WHO ELSE DO YOU KNOW WHO
HAS IMMIGRATED TO CANADA?**

QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

Can you name different religions and traditions practiced in Canada?



WHICH SYMBOLS DO YOU RECOGNIZE? DO YOU HAVE FRIENDS WHO PRACTICE DIFFERENT RELIGIONS?

QUESTIONS FOR KIDS

How old are you? How old are your oldest family members?



IN WHAT YEAR WERE YOU BORN? WHERE DOES YOUR BIRTH YEAR FIT ON THE TIMELINE?

IN WHAT YEAR WERE YOUR OLDEST FAMILY MEMBERS BORN? WHERE DO THEY FIT ON THE TIMELINE?

PANEL DESIGNS WERE ALSO CREATED AND PRESENTED IN FRENCH



50 ans de migration

Commémorant les progrès et les contributions de la communauté musulmane ismailie au Canada, cette exposition rend hommage à notre résilience collective et célèbre le kaléidoscope riche en couleurs qu'est notre communauté. À l'aide d'un collage éclatant et composé de photos de famille, de chronologies, de cartes géographiques et de documents historiques, cette exposition itinérante raconte l'histoire des membres de la communauté musulmane ismailie qui sont venus des quatre coins du monde pour faire de ce pays leur foyer tout en contribuant à bâtir un Canada plus fort.



**Visitez le site web
pour en savoir plus !**



APPENDIX 2

TRAN



SCRIPT

AUDIO PLAY TRANSCRIPT

The audio play, developed by artist Aquil Virani, played during the exhibition installation on a loop.

Muslim Harji (00:10):

I was born in Tanzania. I grew up in Kenya, and finally we were kicked out of Uganda, but most of my growing up was done in Uganda, and it was probably the finest time of my life.

Benafasha Amiri (00:30):

Je m'appelle Benafasha and je suis réfugiée de l'Afghanistan. Je suis venue au Canada quand j'avais juste 8 ans.

Shamsiya MH (00:36):

My name is Shamsiya and I am originally from Tajikistan. I have been in Canada a little less than a decade.

Mazen Kasim (00:47):

My name is Mazen Riyadh Kasim. And I was born in Syria.

Shezan Muhammedi (00:57):

Once in Uganda, the colonials established a three-tiered race and class hierarchy. At the top, you had white British colonials. In the middle, you had Brown South Asians, and on the bottom were local black Ugandans.

Senator Mobina Jaffer (01:09):

I liked Uganda. I always thought I was going to live there forever because we enjoyed our lab. But today I say I'm so glad it happened because we really like Canada.

Shezan Muhammedi (01:20):

What ends up happening is by the 1970s, it is estimated that South Asians controlled about 80 to 90% of Ugandan trade and about 80% of the commercial sector.

Muslim Harji (01:29):

Sector. I'm a fourth generation African. I was born in Africa. My parents were born in Africa. My grandparents were born in Africa, and my great-grandparents came to Africa with the shirts on their backs. This was in 1870.

Shezan Muhammedi (01:46):

With these heightened levels of migration, in conjunction with their privileged position in society, Ugandan Asians became the targets of Ugandan nationalists as colonial collaborators.

Mariam Gabr (01:56):

My grandfather had kind eyes in an even temper and was loved by many. He listened intently to everyone and liked spoiling his grandchildren.

Muslim Harji (02:07):

After the Uganda independence, we were quite well integrated into the society, you know, but still we did not have the right color.

Jeff Goode — CBC (02:20):

Hello, welcome to Rewind. I'm Jeff Goode, sitting in for Michael Enright today. As Syrian refugees continue to make a new home in Canada. Today, on rewind, we're looking back at the first wave of non-European refugees who came to this country. Today, we are talking about a smaller group of mostly Ismaili refugees who've been expelled from Uganda in the early 1970s.

His Highness Aga Khan IV (02:43):

As you may know, my close ties with Canada go back almost four decades to the time when many thousands of Asian refugees from Uganda, including many Ismailis, were welcomed so generously in this society. Earlier this year, we celebrated here in Toronto, the foundation ceremony for the Alah Museum and the new Ismaili Center. So there are powerful chords of memory from four decades ago, four years

ago, and even four months ago that tie me closely to Canada,

Jeff Goode — CBC (03:23):

His Royal Highness, the Aga Khan in 2010, on accepting an honorary Canadian citizenship for his charitable work.

Idi Amin (03:34):

Asians have kept themselves apart as a closed community and have refused to integrate with Ugandan Africans. They have been milking the economy of the country.

Agence des nouvelles (04:26):

L'Ouganda conte 10 millions d'habitants, dont 80 000 d'origine Asiatique. Ce qui ne fait que 0,8 % de la population totale. Et pourtant selon le g'én'érale Idi Amin Dada, père de la nation, c'est d'eux d'où vient tout le mal. Par son decret le 9 aout, le general Amin a donné 90 jours aux inhabitants «non-ougandais» d'origine indienne, pakistanaise, et bangladesh. pour quitter le pays. Ceux qui ne seront pas parti le 8 novembre seront internés dans les camps de concentration organisée par l'armee.

Derek Peterson (04:37):

What went wrong for minorities is that the Amin government, over the course of the seventies, created more and more categories of people who they blamed, or the ills of their time, and who they targeted with violence, and who they sought to displace from Uganda.

Shezan Muhammedi (04:54):

It's also imperative to note that Asians who migrated to Uganda were a diverse and heterogeneous group. They had created several institutions based on religious and regional affiliations, and included Christians, Janes Goans, Hindus belonging to various denominations, multiple Sikh communities, and several other Shia and Sunni Muslims.

Idi Amin (05:14):

I took this decision for the economy of Uganda, and I must make sure that every Ugandan gets a fruit of independent since independence. Actually, Uganda is not yet independent. I will say that I want to see that the whole Kampala Street is not full of Indians. It must be “proper black” and administration in those shops is run by the Ugandans.

Tom Francis (05:42):

But we had a family meeting and we decided, you know, the writings on the wall. You know, if two of them had to leave, there’s no sense in us staying. We heard rumors that Amin was building camps to house people who hadn’t left by the deadline. My mother influenced decision a lot. Many years ago, none of us had been to Canada, and she kept saying to us, if you boys ever decide to leave Uganda, go to Canada. It’s a wonderful country. So there it was right in front of us,

Senator Mobina Jaffer (06:09):

August 5th, the day of my brother-in-law’s wedding, and made this announcement. You know, we all laughed. We didn’t take it seriously. We were at the wedding in the evening, and ha ha ha, he wants us out. Now what next? Ha ha. Honestly, we were laughing. Truthfully.

Tom Francis (06:24):

It was really difficult on our parents because they lost money. They lost their houses. They lost a lot – they had they had to start life again. For them, it was extremely difficult.

News agency (06:42):

Asians in Uganda are lining up at travel agencies hoping to get out before the three month time limit expires. General Amin has imposed severe restrictions on how much money the Asians can take with them. He’s also ordered that all Asian owned businesses must be sold to Africans.

Senator Mobina Jaffer (06:59):

One of the things I really learned from my mother, she's an amazing woman. She never got attached to things. I still remember that auction. And she never worried about things, you know. It was just things to her. She was so, so spiritual. My father had to flee, and my father fled. We thought we had lost him. 'Cause Idi Amin's men came to get him, and he fled, and we had a real nightmare because we thought we'd lost our daddy. Yeah.

Navin Virani (07:32):

My great-grandfather, who also immigrated to America, kept calling Canada Heaven. How could I not participate in this heaven that he talked to me about before he passed away?

Jeff Goode (CBC) (07:50):

It was the first time in Canadian history that Canada had accepted a large group of non-European refugees.

Mike Molloy (07:57):

The interesting thing was that the Prime Minister made the announcement of what we were gonna do right up front, and he, and he set the tone. He made quite a long statement about what was going on and what Canada was gonna do about it. But he ended by saying this: "we are prepared to offer an honorable place in Canadian life to those Ugandans who come to Canada and I, and I'm sure that they will, by their abilities and industry, make an important contribution to Canadian society." Now, I can't tell you how important it was to us as young Canadian civil servants being sent off to some far, far away country to have that statement from our Prime minister.

Tom Francis (08:38):

So when they said, where do you want to go? I said, I want to stay in Montreal. So we went to the YMCA for a few days, and we were, we went to a, an immigration guy. So when I met this immigration officer, manpower, I still remember his name was

Beaudoin. And I told him, I said, you know, I'm going, I would like to go and visit this agricultural campus of McGill University and see if they would accept me into a master's program to continue my graduate studies. And he said, you know what? He said, they probably haven't even heard from Makerere University, and so I'm just telling you: your chances of getting in enough slim to none. And so I said, "Well, that's fine, but let me try it."

Navin Virani (09:20):

He wouldn't stop talking about Vancouver and how beautiful it was, and all his friends were there. And so the first date, all we talked about was Vancouver and Canada.

Tom Francis (09:30):

So I went back to Manpower Guy in Montreal. He said, "how did it go?" I said, great. I'm accepted. I said, they're gonna gimme money. They're gonna give us a, you know, flat apartment. And he couldn't believe it, right? Yeah. He said, they've heard of Makerere. I said, "yeah, not only if they heard of it. I said, they have a hiring regard for it." And it was just – it was a great story. You know, and I think two days later, we left the Y M C A.

Patsy Van Roost (10:00):

No matter why we came, and no matter where we left, your, your heart is broken. That's my theory. Maybe I'm wrong.

Nouri Hassani (10:11):

the first challenging is the language. the second challenging is to find and to make friends. So it's, it's very difficult to be honest.

Navin Virani (10:21):

Like I always wanted my kids to be who they want to be. But nobody gave us a manual how to raise kids in Canada. So we had a really tough time because we were brought up so differently.

Tom Francis (10:38):

We were always a little out of place, even though people were friendly with us and so on. We are always aware that we had a different culture, a different food. We were always trying to blend in, fit in and do things the way Canadians did it.

Mike Molloy (10:56):

The decision made by the government was fast, and it was positive. The British had, had actually formally requested our help on the 18th of August. Cabinet met on the 24th, and the decision was to, first of all, fire off a team to Camp Pala as fast as, as, as that could be done. accept a, an initial target of 3000 people. Take people who meet the normal immigration requirements if you can, and if you can't find enough, who do, the Minister has the authority to declare what was called the, the oppressed minority policy, which would allow the officers to go way beyond the the point system.

Sara Cosemans (11:38):

Ugandan Asians, as a small group, becomes a testing case for refugee and migration policy in the 1970s. And actually, if you look at today, you see what kind of a profound impact it has made.

Abdul Hakim Azizi (11:58):

Afghanistan is a country where we had invested our lives, our energy, our dreams, and our aspirations. And quite tragically, I had to bury them all.

Madina Azizi (12:09):

I was six years old when we crossed Afghanistan to Pakistan. My mom had four young children all by herself. and we literally walked from Afghanistan to Pakistan as refugees.

Benafasha Amiri (12:20):

Malgré que j'étais très jeune, j'ai des souvenirs de l'Afghanistan. Je dirai ce ne'st pas nécessairement des bons souvenirs – les histoires de mes parents, les histoires de ma

famille.

Abdul Hakim Azizi (12:44):

That was not happy moments. But the only thing that was going in the head was that “okay, at least you have saved your life,” but thousands of new concerns come in your mind. Yes,

Benafasha Amiri (12:58):

My WhatsApp messages, sometimes it’s the news of an entire family being killed, and suddenly I tell myself, “No, no, hold on. You are in Canada.”

Madina Azizi (13:07):

Afghans living in diaspora – every time that we meet with our relatives, we grieve, we cry, we talk about Afghanistan. I wish we could do a a lot of things for our people back home. And during that whole time, of course, I was young – I don’t remember much of it, but I remember being in constant fear.

Abdul Hakim Azizi (13:28):

I’m happy that we are here and we’re safe, and we’re struggling for having a good future life

Benafasha Amiri (13:45):

[Dari]

Madina Azizi (14:12):

I’m getting emotional because that’s my country (Afghanistan). That’s my nation. I have relatives there. And even if I did not have relatives there, that’s part of my identity.

Benafasha Amiri (14:15):

[Dari]

Mazen Kasim (14:32):

I graduated from the University of Aleppo in a computer science program. That was 1998. I left Syria right after that. Certainly due to lack of opportunity back then in Syria. And

there was also a two-years mandatory military service that I have to attend if I didn't make the choice to go and serve out in Gulf countries. So I chose to go into Saudi Arabia. I had some relatives there and, and started my career path in there. It was really a great journey of learning and developing myself. Community-wise. I'm also heavily involved in so many kind of areas especially around the Syrian activities and settlements and progress in Edmonton here.

Ahmed Farawan (15:38):

[Arabic]

Mazen Kasim (15:52):

I just wanted to say that end of the day Syria is still a home. Canada is my second home, and I'm so proud being where I'm at, and so far the journey that I've been through that led to this outcome.

Khalil Farawan (16:07):

[Arabic]

Mazen Kasim (16:37):

Of course, I didn't know anything about Canada initially. I landed in Vancouver, hosted by a very close friend to my dad's— Feiroz Rasul. And because I had one cousin here in Edmonton who I was very close to, I decided I'm gonna be moving into Edmonton. And here we are.

Ahmed Farawan (17:00):

[Arabic]

Urdu News (17:23):

[Urdu]

Shamsiya MH (17:43):

Before Canada, I was in Mozambique. Before Mozambique, I was in Geneva, and before Geneva, I was into Tajikistan. Been going around a little bit, live, living in three different

continents. And now I'm here in Canada. My background is in health. I was trained as a medical doctor back in Tajikistan. I am now working at a community health center. I'm a program manager. I'm managing a big team of 20-plus staff.

Jan Dubinski (18:25):

I think diversity is – you learn a lot. You know, you take your blinders off and open your mind up a little bit.

Dominique Pattinier (18:34):

Do I feel like an immigrant? No, not really. I don't think about it every day, Once in a while, I'm, I guess I'm, I am being re reminded, but not, not on a daily basis.

Shamsiya MH (18:47):

I left Tajikistan when I was about 4 to 5 years old. I grew up into Tajikistan, went to school. Tajikistan. I do visit often. My parents, they're both Tajikistan. All my families are there. I have no immediate family here besides my husband's family. My parents are, – they're very proud of me. They're proud what I achieved. I'm from the Badakshan in Tajikistan from the Pamirs, and we do speak a dialect called Pamiri. I do speak Tjaik, which is the official language of Tajikistan. I do speak Russian. that is our second language. And I do speak French. Je parle le francais. And I do speak a little bit of Portuguese when I lived in Mozambique. So I picked up Portuguese when I was there, so a few languages.

Nouri Hassani (20:09):

So yeah, it's it was it was horrible time that I went through, but Alhamdulillah, I'm okay right now. So since I came to Canada, I was, you know, one of the luckiest people, maybe.

Shamsiya MH (20:21):

[Tajik]

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau (20:41):

Canada's a country that was built by immigration. Waves of

people came to this country, were welcomed by the folks who had lived here for millennia – the First Nations and the folks here on Treaty 4 land – and built this society with waves of people fleeing religious prosecution, fleeing, tyranny, fleeing to try and build a better life for themselves here than they had back home. These people always want the same thing: to be able to live in peace, to raise their families, and to create a better future for themselves and their communities.

Navin Virani (21:28):

So, you know, you say it in English, “Hello, or How are you?” [Urdu / Kutchi / Gujurati / Swahili] Then also, I know a little bit of French. “Comment allez-vous ? »

Shamsiya MH (21:56):

For my daughter. I’d like her to have this understanding of – not just geographically where’s, where’s Tajikistan, but – more to learn about the, the language first, of course, the, the traditions and the connections.

Muslim Harji (22:18):

I met my wife at the community center. I was helping out the refugees who were arriving. And when I met my wife there, when I met this girl there, I went out and introduced myself and put my hand forward and said, “Hi, I’m Muslim.” So she said, “Big deal. I’m a Muslim too,” So at that point, I said, no, this is the girl that I have to marry, you know,

Shamsiya MH (22:44):

I’m proud to be Canadian, but I would like to continue and keep that tradition of being a Tajik and introducing a lot of my tradition to my daughter as well. So she feels that she has that background. Yeah, I’m, I’m, I’m proud to be that Canadian.

Shezan Muhammedi (23:03):

It was one of the other structured questions I did ask is, you know, after being in Canada for, you know, 30, 40 years at this point, how do you identify yourself? Very fascinating thing

that came out of that was everyone described themselves as Canadian. and a lot of that had to do with both times. So a lot of 'em said, we've spent so much time in Canada, so it's natural that we feel this attachment. And then many of them expressed what they believed to be Canadian values. So they said, you know, we believe in the values of Canada, which they sort of described as, you know, democracy, freedom of speech. a lot of them said, it's a land of opportunity. So, you know, if you work hard, you can achieve really good things. Very tolerant of both our views and us as a community.

Nouri Hassani (23:45):

Now it's time for me to give back for the community and for the people who help us and help me and help my family. We are human right, and we should help each other regardless from our background, race, religion, or whatever

Shezan Muhammedi (24:09):

I think as a kid, I wasn't thinking about it too much, something that developed as I got older, but there is of course, this sort of shame or this guilt that you feel for, for, for, for benefiting from all their hardships.

Mazen Kasim (24:23):

End of the day, what I wish and hope for my kids is to grow up and be international citizens—people who, you know, are very proud of their origin and culture and religion as well.

Alex Tran (24:41):

I think the immigration stories go beyond the arrival into the new country. There's something interesting that happens afterwards, and to me, what happens to the next generation is interesting.

Benafasha Amiri (24:56):

On a fui l'Afghanistan pour un meilleur securité, premierement, mais aussi pour un espoir d'une meilleur monde. Pour un meilleur avenir, pour notre vie actuel, mais pour les prochaines

générations.

Patsy Van Roost (25:13):

All our stories are different and all are legitimate no matter where you came from, and no matter why you had to come.

Nizar Fakirani (25:22):

The core of it is that we share this value of pluralism, of accepting differences. We are Canadians. Shukr.

[Instrumental interlude until 30:00]



This catalogue includes (1) a small section of writing related to the exhibition, (2) a presentation of exhibition photographs of the installations at venues across Canada, (3) a short collection of press clippings and comments from visitors, (4) an appendix of the printed exhibition panels reproduced here in booklet format, and (5) a transcript of the exhibition's audio play.