

Since opening its doors in 2005, the Arab American National Museum (AANM) remains the nation's only cultural institution that documents, preserves and presents the history, culture and contributions of Arab Americans. Located in Dearborn, Michigan, amid one of the largest concentrations of Arab Americans in the United States, AANM presents original exhibitions, cutting-edge art, film screenings and performances in Michigan and in major cities across the U.S., and continually documents the history and experiences of Arab Americans.

AANM is one of just six Michigan Affiliates of the Smithsonian Institution and is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums. AANM is a founding member of the Detroit area arts collective CultureSource as well as the Immigration and Civil Rights Network of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience and the Michigan Alliance for Cultural Accessibility, and is a member of the National Performance Network.

In 2020, AANM was recognized as one of America's Cultural Treasures by the Ford Foundation for being a "significant national anchor for artistic and cultural" diversity in America." This \$156 million grant initiative was intended to help fund Black, Latinx, Asian and Indigenous arts organizations that have taken a huge hit financially during the COVID-19 pandemic. This major recognition is an acknowledgement of the important and enriching contributions that communities, like the Arab American community, continue to make to the cultural life of the United States.

AANM is an institution of ACCESS, the largest Arab American community nonprofit in the nation.











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Oct. 1, 2020 - Sept. 30, 2021

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Dear friends.

By the time you read this, the Arab American National Museum will have opened to the public for the first time in almost two years, and we are relieved and filled with joy to do so. While intended as an exercise in caution, we took advantage of the closure to carry out some much-needed work throughout our building, including expansion of the Curatorial department workspace in the Museum's Lower Level and enhancing our core exhibits with technical upgrades. Our reopening was a quiet affair; the staff gathered for an intimate ribbon-cutting ceremony befitting the circumstances of the pandemic with which we were, and still are, grappling. With safety measures in place, we've welcomed our community back into our physical space, brightening up our halls once more.

The reopening meant more than just AANM's triumph over the challenges and adversities we faced during the past two years. It was a moment to reflect on what kind of museum we were when we closed in March 2020 and what we had become since. In many ways, we were the same museum we had always been:

One that is dedicated to collecting, preserving and sharing the stories of Arabs who immigrated to the United States and their progeny. Though steadfast in our mission in 2020-21, we also experienced changes that were natural responses to the prevailing circumstances around us. We have become nimbler and more resourceful in response to uncertainty, and more daring. Our digital presence and impact are unquestionable, and we have become recognized for our innovative and creative online programming, which you can read about in the pages of this report. Our challenge will be to continue to engage our audiences across the nation and the world while serving our most immediate supporters and visitors living in southeast Michigan. "Digital AANM" is here to stay, and we are excited about pushing hybrid (physical and virtual) platforms to their full potential while reaching for ours.

This past year was also one of transitions. At the end of 2020, Dr. Fawwaz Ulaby stepped down as chairman of the AANM National Advisory Board. I want to thank him for his dedication and tireless service to the Museum and the Arab American community, as well as for his wise counsel during my first years as director. I am excited to be working with his successor, Leila Hilal, who has already made an indelible mark injecting new energy into the Advisory Board and its work. Together, with AANM's staff, we have embarked on a strategic planning process that has been reflective of our Museum's shifting identity, and which we will unveil very soon.

As always, I want to thank you—our supporters and friends—for enabling us to keep doing the important work of preserving our heritage this past year, and I hope for years to come. I look forward to continuing to guide this institution as we head into another year of newness, change and opportunity.

Warmly,

Diana Abouali



Dear Friends,

On January 1, 2021, I had the honor of becoming chair of the National Advisory Board (NAB) for the Arab American National Museum. I stepped into this role after two terms of board service. From the vantage point of chair, I had the great pleasure of broadening my engagement with Museum staff and its many national and local partners in the arts and cultural space.

AANM's dedication to uplifting Arab American artists and writers ensures that our communities are a visible part of the country's diverse tapestry and social movements at this critical time in our collective history. The Museum's contributions in these areas have been acknowledged by several of the country's most prestigious funding programs, including the Ford Foundation's America's Cultural Treasures initiative, which awarded 20 national organizations representing historically marginalized and under-recognized communities across the U.S. This grant award, along with additional support from across the foundation community—including the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation—has been vital to advancing AANM's ingenuity and impact throughout the pandemic.

Over the last year, the Museum navigated a second year of pandemic-related challenges with remarkable fortitude. The Museum continued to deepen its local footprint and expand its national reach through myriad innovations. This includes commissioning cutting-edge artwork from traditionally less represented Arab American and diasporic voices; attracting multimedia artists-inresidence; streaming a multi-day film festival that reached audiences across the globe; further digitization of the Museum's growing archival collections; and launching virtual exhibit tour modules and digital educational resources for K-12 educators. High amongst its impressive programming was the virtual production of JAM3A, a four-day music and arts festival livestreamed to audiences across the globe. These programs exemplify the resiliency, relevancy and unwavering dedication and creativity of AANM and its staff, and represent the foundation upon which the Museum will further expand its service to partners, the community and the public at large.

Even as the Museum continued to navigate daunting uncertainties related to COVID-19, it took the courageous step of launching an intensive five-year strategic planning process. The plan's transformative framework—which relied heavily on the input of a strong cohort of staff, advisory board members, and leadership—positions the Museum to grow its footprint through an informed, inclusive, and intentional roadmap. AANM is well positioned to undertake the bold vision it foresees, as it enters 2022 with a formidable staff, new capacities for hybrid programming, a robust network of national and regional funding partners, new intersecting initiatives with ACCESS' national institutions, and a committed board of advisers.

On behalf of the National Advisory Board, I want to thank those who championed the Arab American National Museum through 2021, including the commendable staff, Friends of the Museum Committee, our generous donors, Members and partners, and our thriving Arab American communities. I look forward to the year ahead.

Sincerely,

Leila Hilal

Foundation in 2020.



#FROMTHEARCHIVES

A social media campaign launched in 2017, #FTA is our way of showcasing artifacts in the Museum, sharing the story behind the object and placing it within a larger social and historical context. This year, #FTA became a tool to show solidarity and educate our audiences on a variety of subjects, including Palestinian resistance and liberation (top right: Postcard of Al-Aqsa Mosque in Palestine c. 1998, detail), Arab American activism, and LGBTQIA+ history in the Arab diaspora, the latter being an Instagram takeover by Dr. Charlotte Karem Albrecht, Assistant Professor at the University of Michigan.

CENTER FOR ARAB NARRATIVES (CAN)

Launched in spring 2021, CAN is a program of ACCESS that facilitates interdisciplinary and community-informed research to improve the well-being of Arab communities. Housed at AANM, CAN works closely with ACCESS and its national institutions to bridge perspectives from the humanities and public health to keep research relevant beyond academic walls, even bringing those perspectives into conversations about art and culture.

COMMISSIONED WORK

With support from generous funders, we commissioned artwork by four artists this year: Ganzeer (mixed media/ collage; on left: Immigrant Blues #5: Woshwoosh), Almigdad Aldikhaiiry (oil painting; center right: The Pollinator, detail), Tarek Yamani (music), and Alia Ali (visual art), as well as four original short films by various filmmakers to be included in our Core Galleries. The breadth and variety of these artists reflects our intention to uplift, support and showcase artists of color from the SWANA (Southwest Asian and North African) region, while also archiving their work as part of the larger Arab American story.

ACQUISITIONS

Despite being closed to the public due to the pandemic since March 2020, our curatorial team has continued working behind the scenes, caring for our robust collections and working with new artifact donations. This year, we received several notable acquisitions, including: personal photo albums of the late scholar Philip Hitti (1886-1978) (bottom right); Egyptian jasmine and Somali frankincense from artist-in-residence Dana El Masri; an enamel bracelet by artist Adnan Charara with Arabic/English characters in each link reading "Man Ana" or "Who Am I?"; and so much more.







TOURING THE MUSEUM



QALAM WA KALIMA

In October 2020, AANM commemorated the centennial anniversary of Al-Rabita Al-Qalamiyya (The Pen League), the literary society established in New York City in 1920 by a group of Arab writers and poets—Kahlil Gibran, Ameen Rihani, Elia Abu Madi (top right) and others who immigrated to the United States at the turn of the 20th century, with an exclusive virtual fundraiser. The event paid tribute to the enduring legacy of the Pen League's members through an online exhibition featuring works by and archival material from AANM's collection related to the Pen League members, as well as a showcase of the members' works via readings by contemporary Arab American poets and writers: Diana Abu-Jaber, Sinan Antoon, Carol W. N. Fadda, Khaled Mattawa and Omar Offendum.

ON VIEW FROM MICHIGAN AVE.

In an effort to get creative and still share art with the community, we presented two window exhibitions, *soft* powers and SURA, in the Museum's Library windows facing Michigan Ave. Throughout Arab American Heritage Month (April), the soft powers window exhibition (on left) featured a different fiber etching by Yasmine Nasser Diaz every week alongside an iteration of her Teenage Bedroom series, both of which are available for in-person viewing now that the Museum has reopened. Similarly, the SURA window exhibition (bottom right) featured work from the Spring 2021 semester, where students focused on the question, "Who am I?" by telling their story and capturing experiences through their photographs.

VIRTUAL LEARNING AND EDUCATION

In the fall of 2020, most schools in the area went back to in-person learning, but our building remained closed to the public. However, our Education team was not dismayed. After a couple of lessons and experiments with different tools and technologies, we adapted our in-person tours and lesson plans for virtual learning, providing a complete virtual tour package for educators that included live or recorded tours, webpages for each of our Core Galleries, teaching exercises, interactive activities for students, video/audio/literary resources for classrooms, and access to AANM's digital objects and archive. Available and accessible to educators year-round, the Education team also hosted a Virtual Educator Open House each semester to walk teachers through their options and provide any immediate help or insight.





Working in the virtual world has become the "new normal", and we continued to grow and expand our offerings and skills. In the first year of the pandemic, we saw online public programming that ranged from open mic nights to book clubs to virtual concerts and outdoor drive-in events, such as the drive-in film screening of the classic Egyptian film, Days and Nights (on cover). This year, with a few more tools and greater understanding, we provided 3,873 hours of insightful and inspiring virtual programs including a variety of literary and arts workshops, the Arab American Book Awards, a monthly film series, exclusive concerts and performances, and a social mediabased chef series.

BODY WATANI: SOUL SPEAK

Though it was a cold night, we were eager to be hosting events in-person again. Our first public program since pausing in-person activities, this drive-in dance production created and performed by artist-in-residence Leila Awadallah (on left) with dancers Anurima Kumar and Elisandra Mairym Rosario, was a new experiment for us. Our parking lot became a stage with the help of the audience members' cars forming a circle around the dancers. It felt like a dream to be sharing space with people again, especially for a movement piece that spoke to the healing of the body.

THE WANDERING PALESTINIAN

In late winter, members of AANM's Virtual Book Club gathered around their computers to listen to AANM Founding Director, Dr. Anan Ameri, speak about her new book, *The Wandering Palestinian*, with Deputy Director Jumana Salamey. The wholesome, touching talk not only between writer and moderator, but mentor and mentee, left audiences with a few lessons from Dr. Anan: it is vital to participate in life and try; storytelling has power beyond entertainment; and writing can be a true healer.

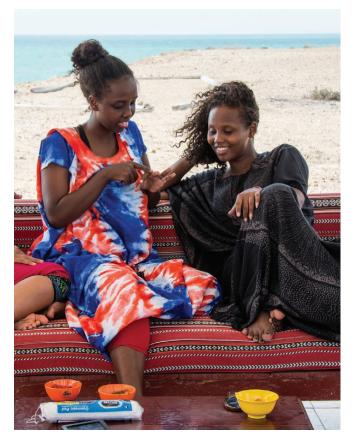
INDKNA: VIRTUAL PRIDE CONCERT

During Pride Month, we partnered with YallaPunk to present the debut performance of INDKNA (top right), a new band of gueer, Yemeni women and non-binary folks. Gaining over 1,000 views since airing in June, the concert was novel in many ways: it added to a growing queer, SWANA focused, arts-centered space; blended folk and traditional Yemeni music with contemporary sounds of the diaspora; and brought the band members living in different parts of the country together in the same space.

ARAB FILM FEST COLLAB

For the first time ever, four national SWANA organizations - AANM, the Arab Film and Media Institute, ArteEast and Mizna – came together to present a virtual film festival. At a time when support for arts organizations was scarce, our four organizations collaborated and pooled resources to produce one of our most successful programs of 2020. AFFC presented 73 films from sixteen countries (bottom right: *Dhalinyaro* dir. Lula Ali Ismaïl) and more than ten panel discussions and workshops. Audiences spanned 45 states, racking up over 10,000 streams. Through AFFC, we highlighted Arab, Afro-Arab and Black SWANA voices, capturing the complexity of the Arabic-speaking world, its diaspora and diverse narratives.





Tarab dub, Shamstep, hip-hop, Nubian pop, rock, electronic, folk and something ethereal: each of these musical genres and more were showcased at the longawaited music and arts festival, JAM3A (pronounced "jam-aa," which means "gathering" in Arabic). After making the difficult decision to transform the wouldhave-been local festival into a virtually and internationally accessible four-day event in September, JAM3A broke barriers and set records at AANM. With nine performances in five languages, four engaging talkbacks, three free films and a curated virtual marketplace, the festival was a smashing success, engaging audiences locally, nationally and internationally. What started out as a fun idea to bring the Arab music scene to AANM's backyard became a unique opportunity to connect the global Arab diaspora through a love of song, dance and art.

PERFORMANCES

JAM3A featured acts by 47SOUL, Alsarah & The Nubatones, Emel, Hello Psychaleppo (on left), Lime Rickey International, Medusa TN (top right), Oddisee and Ramy Essam, with a special production by Poetic Societies called REMOooOTE: Detroit-Palestine. The performances were livestreamed over the course of four days and remain available online for the public to revisit, re-experience and jam out to the incredible performances made exclusively for this festival.

TALKBACKS

In addition to musical performances, the artists participated in moderated talkbacks, sharing insight on their artistic and musical practices, the harsh reality and impact COVID and isolation had on their lives, the intersections of music, identity and politics, and so much more.

VIRTUAL MARKETPLACE

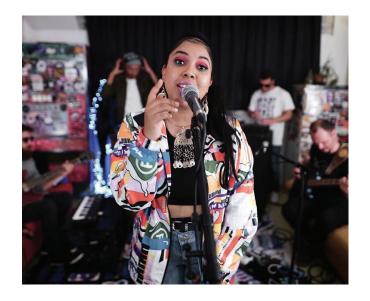
Curated by the ACCESS Entrepreneurial Growth team, the marketplace showcased small artisan businesses and highlighted SWANA entrepreneurs.

MAKANA

Commissioned by AANM with support from the Mellon Foundation, Hello Psychaleppo created and produced a new single and music video called MAKANA. Wonderfully trippy and animated by Psychaleppo himself, the premiere was followed by an interview and behind-the-scenes look at its creation and inspiration, now housed in our digital archive.

All four days of JAM3A were literally a warm hug we all needed. This virtual festival brought so many people together worldwide at a time when many of us have felt isolated and alone. It reminded me how powerful and moving music is. To hear the conversations at the end of the performances and see how each artist intersects with the others really brought another layer of life to the carefully curated programming.

- JAM3A attendee







ARTISTS + RESIDENTS

AANM's Artists + Residents program is a platform for established and emerging artists to cultivate and grow their practices, connecting artists from across the nation and the globe with our local community, while also being key in our efforts to make Dearborn a national hub for Arab American art. Since the pandemic, residencies have taken place in-person as well as virtually, engaging the community in ways big and small, from talks and workshops to large-scale productions and exhibitions. This year's residencies spanned a vast range of mediums and practices, presenting exciting and cutting-edge performances and programs, and saw the launch of the Artists + Residents Substack blog which collects reflections from our residents about their projects and time spent with the Museum.

Leila Awadallah; LeilAwa TERRANEA: hakawati of the sea (dance)



A Palestinian American artist, Leila spent her residency working on weaving together stories centering SWANA bodies in relation to the sea while developing *TERRANEA*, in collaboration with the community. Along with dancers Anurima Kumar and Elisandra Mairym Rosario, Awadallah conceived and performed in *Body Watani: soul speak*, a drive-in dance performance that took place in the parking lot behind AANM.

Zahir Janmohamed
Telling Our 2020 Stories
(narrative/storytelling)



During his residency, Zahir led an online writing workshop series, encouraging participants to develop stories about their pandemic experiences. Each workshop featured metro Detroit area guest speakers who are experts in their field. Zahir also investigated the impact of the pandemic on Arab and Arab American communities in the U.S. with a focus on Dearborn, sharing blog posts around the election, pandemic-related domestic violence spikes and more.

Almigdad Aldikhaiiry - کینونة (oil painting)



Almigdad is a Sudanese environmental artist, currently based in the U.S., who views art as a means to fight crises. He has devoted his artistic expertise to nature and climate change for over ten years. He spent his residency developing an oil painting series related to the environment, pollution and climate change, for a future exhibition at AANM, titled كينونة – Existence, including works commissioned by the Museum.

Andrea Assaf Drones & the Post-9/11 Era (theatre/multimedia)



During her remote residency, Lebanese American performer, writer and director Andrea developed the script and media for *DRONE*, a play co-commissioned by AANM. Andrea invited the community to engage in the creative process through an online performance and poetry reading that explored themes of surveillance and drone technology in the post-9/11 era, followed by an open call for stories that respond to these themes.

Lara Atallah
The Sun That Stood Still
(writing/multimedia)



In this remote residency, Lara focused on writing the text and building the layout for *The Sun That Stood Still*, an artist book about her grandmother, loss, Lebanon and the Mediterranean. Lara also hosted "What's On Your Plate?" a virtual open mic and iftar event, in celebration of Poetry Month and Arab American Heritage Month, where writers of poetry, prose, music and more gathered to share their work and reflections.

Denmo Ibrahim TALATA (theatre)



Growing up in diaspora, Egyptian American Denmo often felt conflicted about her identity and notions of home. Inspired by Chekhov's *Three Sisters*, Denmo spent her residency working with the classic text and re-imagining it in Dearborn to create *TALATA*. Working directly with the local Arab community, *TALATA* aims to explore classism, misogyny, colonialism and Islamophobia from an interior perspective of being Arab, Muslim, female and American.

Deena Mohamed
Shubeik Lubeik
(comics/visual narrative)



A graphic novel trilogy set in Cairo, *Shubeik Lubeik* is an urban fantasy where wishes are literally for sale; the more expensive, the greater their ability to fulfill your dreams. Originally published in Arabic in three volumes, it is now set to be published in a combined English volume in 2022. Deena spent her residency working on the English adaptation, and also led a workshop on translating comics in partnership with Green Brain Comics in Dearborn.

Dana El Masri
Scent, Ritual & Olfactory
Traditions (olfaction)



Dana's work encompasses bridging cultures and mediums to create multi-sensory, immersive experiences. During this residency, Dana continued her research on connections between scent and culture, and how it connects us to our memories of home. She also translated and created a glossary of SWANA indigenous plant names, and led two programs, A Scent Memory Workshop as well as a Smell Walk around Dearborn.

MALAYEEN Voices (music/multimedia



Leyya, also known as Lime Rickey International, is a Palestinian Syrian American artist working with sound, performance and hybrid transmissions. During her residency, she invited participants to sing their family and homeland songs, to be transformed for the future in the online platform MALAYEEN.space. As Lime Rickey, she performed at JAM3A, with a set incorporating these community songs as well as excerpts from her upcoming work *City & World*.

Oct. 1, 2020 - Sept. 30, 2021

\$500,000+

Ford Foundation

Michigan Department of Civil Rights (MDCR)

\$200.000 - \$499.999

John S. and James L. Knight Foundation The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation

\$50,000 - \$199,999

Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan General Motors

Institute of Museum and Library Services National Endowment for the Humanities

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Alif Institute, Atlanta

Angel Island Immigration Station Foundation, San Francisco

Arab America, Washington, D.C.

Arab American Civic Council, Anaheim, Calif.

Arab Film and Media Institute

Arab.AMP, Oakland, Calif.

Art2Action, Tampa, Fla. ArteEast, New York

The Arts Center at NYU Abu Dhabi, UAE

Batch Brewing Company, Detroit

Center for Arab American Studies at UMich-Dearborn, Dearborn, Mich.

Cinema Lamont, Detroit

City Hall ArtSpace Lofts, Dearborn, Mich.

Concert of Colors, Detroit

Congressional Art Competition, District 12, Washington, D.C.

CultureSource, Detroit

Dearborn Public Library, Dearborn, Mich.

Detroit Historical Society Detroit Institute of Arts

Detroit Public Television

DISCO RIOT, San Diego

Downtown Dearborn Ellis Island National Museum of Immigration, Jersey City, N.J.

Games for Change, New York

Georgetown University, Washington, D.C.

Green Brain Comics, Dearborn, Mich. The Henry Ford, Dearborn, Mich.

International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, New York

Keiga Foundation, Roseville, Mich.

Made By Us

Marin Theatre Company & Storykrapht, Mill Valley, Calif.

Michigan Quarterly Review, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Michigan Science Center, Detroit

Middle East Institute, Washington, D.C.

Mizna, St. Paul, Minn.

Montgomery College, Md.

MotorCities National Heritage Area Partnership, Detroit

Museum of the Palestinian People, Washington, D.C.

National Performance Network, New Orleans

Poetry Foundation, Chicago

Saffron De Twah, Detroit Smithsonian Affiliates, Washington, D.C.

Smithsonian Institute, Washington, D.C.

Source Booksellers, Detroit

Sukoon, Dearborn, Mich.

TAKE ON HATE, Dearborn, Mich.

Tenement Museum, New York

UMS, Ann Arbor, Mich.

University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, Mich.

Arab and Muslim American Studies

Center for Middle East & North African Studies (CMENAS) Institute for the Humanities

Program in Public Scholarship

School of Information (UMSI) Wing Luke Museum, Seattle

YallaPunk, Philadelphia

AANM BY THE NUMBERS

SCHEDULE OF REVENUE & EXPENSES (UNAUDITED)

Oct. 1, 2020 - Sept. 30, 2021

CONTRIBUTIONS & GRANTS

Individuals, Memberships and Special Events (Net)	\$170,698
Corporations	\$55,600
Foundations	\$582,414
Government	\$732,451
Subtotal: Contributions & Grants	\$1,541,163

EARNED REVENUE

Program Fees, Gift Shop, Rentals and Admissions	\$63,905
AANM Endowment Fund - Distribution	\$80,977
Subtotal: Earned Revenue	\$144,882

Total Revenue \$1,686,045

OPERATIONAL EXPENSES

Admin and Operations Salary and Benefits	\$320,770
Facility Operations	\$423,482
Exhibits, Education and Public Programming	\$937,498

Total Operational Expenses \$1,681,750

AANM ENDOWMENT FUND

The AANM Endowment Fund consists of six funds, three invested with Charles Schwab and three maintained by the Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (CFSEM). As of Sept. 30, 2021, the market value of the fund reported as an asset on the ACCESS balance sheet consists of the following:

Funds maintained at CFSEM \$1,369,833
Funds invested at Charles Schwab \$3,875,463

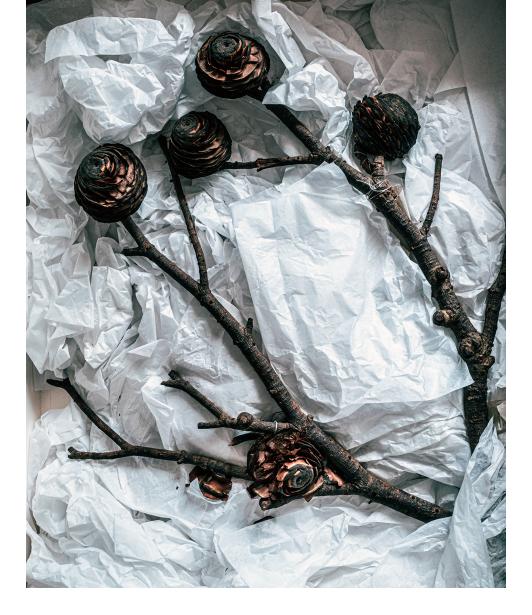
Total \$5,245,296

The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan (CFSEM) has also accepted gifts from unrelated donors for the benefit of AANM. These assets are not reported on the balance sheet since CFSEM maintains variance power with respect to the assets contributed to them for our benefit. The total value of these assets as of September 30, 2021 is \$3,009,853.

ATTENDANCE & USAGE

Additions to the Collection	50 items and 4 linear feet of archives
Online Collections page views (CONTENTdm)	36,579
Number of art commissions	7
Hours of virtual programming	3,873
Virtual program attendees	29,686

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Cedar branch from the Lebanese Government that hung in the Al-Hoda offices, ca. 1930s. Gift of Helen Samhan and the University of Minnesota Immigration History Research Center. This item featured in an online exhibition as part of a centennial celebration of Al-Rabita Al-Qalamiyya (The Pen League). Read more on page 8.

