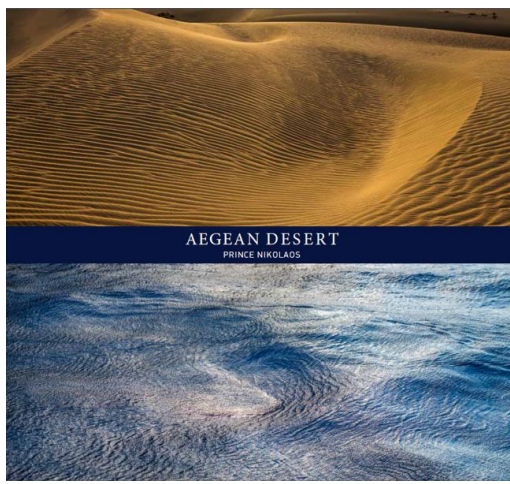


## PRESS RELEASE

### AEGEAN DESERT – H.R.H. PRINCE NIKOLAOS

#### Photography Exhibition at the Benaki Museum of Islamic Art



**October 10, 2019 - January 19, 2020**

Athens, October 8, 2019: the opening reception of Prince Nikolaos' photography exhibition, Aegean Desert, took place at the Benaki Museum of Islamic Art and will be on view from October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020.

Prince Nikolaos, a champion of Greece and an avid traveler, is inspired by nature. During one of his trips to Doha, he met HE Sheikha Al-Mayassa bint Hamad Al-Thani, one of the world's leading art figures, who invited him to photograph and discover the Qatari desert. During his travels, he identified features reminiscent of his homeland Greece, which is the key source of his creativity. As a result, he attempted to highlight, through his lens, the parallels between the desert and the sea, elements that are so different and yet so similar. Upon his return to Greece, he began traveling and taking photographs of the Aegean Sea that related to his memories of Qatar. These images, on the one hand, accentuate the beauty and uniqueness of the desert and the sea, while on the other, underline the contrast of these elements. These photographs engage the viewer in a mental journey through a visual interplay of scenery and perception, creating an unexpected dialogue. This is how the idea for the exhibition 'Aegean Desert' was born, which constitutes the first institutional cultural initiative between Greece and Qatar.

The artist leads the visitor to transcend the geographical boundaries of a photography exhibition. He creates two art installations in Athens and in Doha, presenting images of the Aegean Sea and the Qatari desert side by side. The works are displayed in specially designed spaces based on the aesthetics of each country. In Athens, the photographs, printed on

aluminium, are exhibited inside a Bedouin winter tent, or bait-al-shaar, which was created specifically for this exhibition in the courtyard of the museum. The floor is covered with carpets and contains a traditional Arab seating, or majlis. In Doha, the works are shown within a traditional Aegean windmill placed at the Katara Cultural Foundation.

The exhibitions are enriched with music by the great composers Evanthia Reboutsika and Dana Alfardan, highlighting the dialogue of cultures through art. In a world where images prevail, the artist seeks to establish an interactive relationship with the viewers and challenges them to see, hear, feel, and thus participate in the creative activity.

The “Aegean Desert” exhibition consists of two parts:

- Athens, Greece: October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at the Benaki Museum of Islamic Art, 18 works will be exhibited in a Bedouin tent (bait al shaar) created especially for the exhibition in the courtyard of the Museum.

- Doha, Qatar: November 20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 at the Katara Cultural Foundation, the series of works will be presented in a traditional Aegean windmill created especially for the exhibition.

Both exhibitions have been curated by Marilena Koutsoukou.

**Exhibition duration:** 10 October 2019 - 19 January 2020

**Address:** Benaki Museum of Islamic Art, Ag. Asomaton 22 & Dipylou 12 street, 105 53 Athens

**Opening hours:** Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday: 10:00 - 18:00

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