

PRESS RELEASE

## Jameel Journey to Turkey Ends with Ankara Exhibition for Participants

JEDDAH, Saudi Arabia – May 29, 2016

Art Jameel and The Crossway Foundation are pleased to announce an exciting conclusion to **Jameel Journey to Turkey**, the latest in a series of collaborative initiatives to give young artists with ties to the Gulf region the opportunity to work and travel across international borders.

An exhibition of work by the six young photographers from Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait and Bahrain who set out on an eleven-day trip around Turkey from May 12 to 23, is now on display at Ka Atolyesi in Ankara, where the participants have also produced a publication on the subject of this year's theme, *migration*.

The six participants are the previous winners of Art Jameel Photography Award.

Imogen Ware, Managing Director of the Crossway Foundation, which organised Jameel Journey to Turkey, said: "It was an enriching experience for all parties involved. Thinking about photography and Turkey within the framework of migration inspired conversations on many subjects, ranging from the photographer's responsibility in the political and social context of 2016 to the commonalities between the Gulf region and Turkey as crossroads of different cultures."

During their time in Turkey the photographers received a private lecture and portfolio review from conceptual artist and photographer Orhan Cem Çetin, visited the studio of artist-photographer Ali Taptık, heard talks from prominent photographers, artists and curators such as Bikem Ekberzade, Özge Ersoy, Zeynep Beler, Beril Gür, and Sevim Sancaktar at cultural institutions including Istanbul Modern and Collector Space, and explored and photographed Istanbul's picturesque Princes' Islands with members of Geniş Açı Project Office (GAPO) and NAR Photos. In Cappadocia, the participants enjoyed a sunrise hot air balloon trip and visits to the famous volcanic landscape of fairy chimneys and underground cities, before heading to Ankara for special three-day publication workshop at Ka Atölyesi.

The group's exhibition at Ka Atolyesi, titled, *It's a bad word, 'belong'*, runs for two weeks, until June 4, 2016, and is accompanied by a collaborative artist's book based on the exhibition, titled *Köprü / Kubri* (meaning *bridge* in Turkish and Arabic respectively).

Turkish visual artist Merve Ünsal who acted as Project Mentor during the team's time in Turkey said: "This has been such an inspiring endeavour for me as an artist. Working with

such a diverse group of participants and being part of this collaborative experience was quite unique. I look forward to further conversations with everybody involved in the project."

During her time in Turkey **Farah Salem**, 24, produced a video of a performance she realised in Love Valley, Cappadocia. The exhibition also features an interactive piece that relates to the video. Farah said, "For me, one of the most important aspects of the trip was being able to share our work and get feedback from the rest of the team and from all of the artists and photographers that we met. I believe that you need criticism in order for your work to grow, otherwise it is easy to get stuck doing the same thing and to repeat the same mistakes."

**Akram Al-Amoudi**, 31, mixed abstract images of landscape with visually manipulated portraits to narrate the turbulence that he associates with migration. Reflecting on his experience in Turkey, he said: "I didn't realise how substantial and beneficial it would be to my growth both as a photographer and as a person to be part of this initiative. It took me by surprise; it is an experience that I found to be so unique in its creation and unlike anything I have ever done before. Through this journey we were able to connect with other artists and photographers and to learn from their experiences and the struggles they faced in their own country. This has helped me form a new level of understanding and critical thinking that I will apply to all future projects. I view this journey as a form of education that money simply cannot buy. I am very grateful for this experience and to the Crossway Foundation and Art Jameel teams for putting it together."

In a statement on refugees and the current crisis gripping Turkey and much of Europe, **Marwan Haredy**, 20, stretched cling-film over his work to mimic the suffocation of moving from place to place. He commented: "I believe that each one of us developed our work by at least 50%. It was especially beneficial for us to be working with Turkish artists and to see how they work. That was hugely important for us to grow as artists and to help with how we view our own work."

In her contribution to the exhibition, the photographer **Tyma Hezam**, 20, celebrates the Third Culture Kid phenomenon in the Middle East with a new genre she calls 'Habibi Punk'. **Rawan Husseini**, 26, created images of signage in Turkey, because "Migrating to a new place means being bombarded with a totally new language which may be impossible to understand. The migrant's life is made harder by that gap in communication, and it instils in them a feeling of helplessness and alienation." **Mohammad Shibli**, 25, worked on images of flora in urban spaces which he then juxtaposed with migration routes. "The way plants rise up against walls within the cramped spaces of the city is not too dissimilar to how people move across borders on the global map in search of a better life", he said.

This is the third Jameel Journey to have been organised by Art Jameel and the Crossway Foundation, following successful iterations in Spain and Japan in 2015. The Crossway Foundation has organised nine other journeys to the UK, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Brazil, Oman and the United Arab Emirates, giving hundreds of young artists the chance to travel and develop their practice

**ENDS**

**Exhibition:** “*It’s a Bad Word, Belong*”  
May 22 - June 4, 2016

Weekdays 11:00 - 16:00; weekends 14:00 - 18:00

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Please contact the venue before visiting, as workshops may be taking place.

[Exhibition Facebook Event](#)

**All photographs from the team’s time in Turkey can be found by clicking [here](#) and the video trailer can be found by clicking [here](#). A short film outlining the entire project will be released in early June 2016.**

**For all press enquiries, including image requests, contact:**

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## **NOTES TO EDITORS**

### **ART JAMEEL**

Art Jameel, one of Community Jameel’s Initiatives, fosters and promotes contemporary art and creative entrepreneurship across the MENAT region. In partnership with arts organizations worldwide, Art Jameel is developing two arts centres and cultural exchange programmes to encourage networking and knowledge sharing.

Art Jameel is the founding partner of Edge of Arabia, The Crossway Foundation, Jeddah Art Week, and The Archive. In partnership with the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, it awards the biannual Jameel Prize for contemporary art and design inspired by Islamic traditions. Additional projects include: Art Jameel Photography Award; Jeddah Sculpture Museum, a public park established in collaboration with Jeddah Municipality; Jameel Arts Education at schools; the House of Traditional Arts in Jeddah and the Art Jameel Programme for Traditional Arts and Crafts in Fustat, Cairo, both developed in partnership with the Prince’s School of Traditional Arts in London.

Community Jameel was established in 2003 to promote positive social change, and has been undertaking this through the establishment of long-term partnerships with international institutions, and the creation of initiatives in the fields of Job Creation, Global Poverty Alleviation, Arts & Culture, Education & Training, Health & Social, and Food & Water Security. More information on Community Jameel’s considerable set of initiatives can be found online at [www.cjameel.org](http://www.cjameel.org).

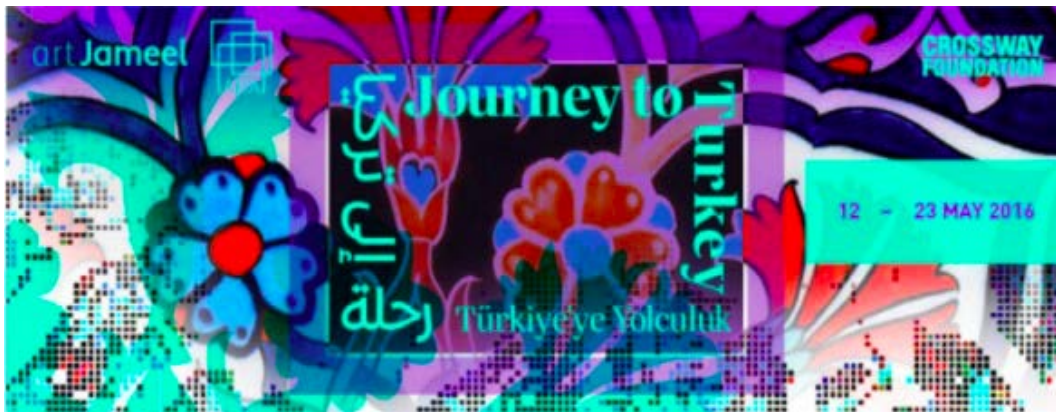
### **ART JAMEEL PHOTOGRAPHY AWARD**

Art Jameel, one of Community Jameel's Initiatives, fosters and promotes contemporary art. **The Art Jameel Photography Award (AJPA)** is one of Art Jameel's initiatives. AJPA's mission is to discover emerging talents, develop their skills and exhibit exceptional photographs. Furthermore, it promotes the art of photography and the achievements of the finest photographers to a diverse audience. [www.ajpa.artjameel.org](http://www.ajpa.artjameel.org)

## CROSSWAY FOUNDATION

**The Crossway Foundation** is a UK-based charitable foundation delivering arts and education initiatives for young people in the Middle East and the UK. The Foundation focuses on delivering international creative journeys for young people, as well as running a public programme that is free and open to all.

The Crossway Foundation has been delivering life-changing journeys since 2007, working with young artists in Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Qatar, United Arab Emirates, Pakistan and Malaysia. [www.crossway-foundation.org](http://www.crossway-foundation.org)



[www.artjameel.aici.org](http://www.artjameel.aici.org) | [www.ajpa.artjameel.org](http://www.ajpa.artjameel.org) | [www.crossway-foundation.org](http://www.crossway-foundation.org)

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