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image: Sandow Birk, *American Qur'an Sura 29 (a)*, 2010, Courtesy of P.P.O.W Gallery, NY and Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco

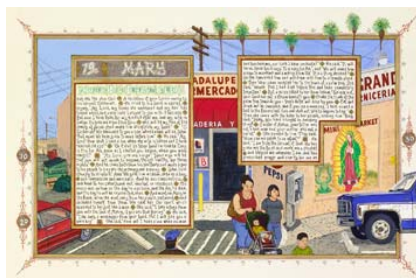


image: Sandow Birk, *American Qur'an Sura 19 (a)*, 2010, Courtesy of P.P.O.W Gallery, NY and Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco



image: Sandow Birk

The Andy Warhol Museum

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One of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

THE WORD OF GOD: SANDOW BIRK'S AMERICAN QUR'AN

(Pittsburgh, PA)...February 14, 2011... The Andy Warhol Museum announces its latest special exhibition, *The Word of God: Sandow Birk's American Qur'an*.

For five years Sandow Birk has been creating his epic body of work *American Qur'an*. In this ongoing series, Birk employs traditional Islamic calligraphy and painting techniques to illustrate the entire 114 Suras of the Qur'an. Using ink, gouache and a hand-lettered "font" based on graffiti tagging, he illuminates the verses with relevant scenes from contemporary American life. A selection of these Suras will be on view February 26 – May 1, 2011. The exhibition tour is organized by Forma Projects: 21, Venice, California.

This exhibition is the first in an ongoing series titled *The Word of God*, which will examine major religious texts through the lens of contemporary art.

The Warhol has, in its sixteen year history, presented difficult or controversial imagery and art in order to spark community dialogue. The dialogues and visitor experiences from such encounters with art and images are powerful and potentially community changing.

Exhibition Related Public Programming

Opening Celebration – The Word of God: Sandow Birk's American Qur'an
Saturday, February 26, 2011

3 p.m.

Join us as we celebrate the opening of our latest exhibition, *The Word of God: Sandow Birk's American Qur'an*.

3 pm Sandow Birk Talk – seating is limited

4 pm Reception – complimentary coffee, tea and lite bites; cash wine bar

Free with Museum admission

Symposium - Dis[Locating] Culture: Contemporary Islamic Art in America

-more-

THE WORD OF GOD: SANDOW BIRK'S AMERICAN QUR'AN

Presented by Michael Berger and Reem Alalusi with the Pittsburgh Middle East Institute and The Warhol.

Saturday, April 16, 2011

1 – 4 p.m. Symposium

4 – 5 p.m. Reception - Complimentary coffee, tea and lite bites; cash wine bar.

A symposium with keynote by Dr. Reza Aslan. Aslan, an internationally acclaimed writer and scholar of religions and contributing editor at the Daily Beast (thedailybeast.com), has appeared on The Daily Show with Jon Stewart, The Colbert Report, and Real Time with Bill Maher.

Guest panel of artists, scholars, and critics from around the country including...

Negar Ahkami, contemporary artist, New York

Reem Alalusi, Curator and Scholar

Sadow Birk, contemporary artist, Los Angeles

Leila Taghinia-Milani Heller, art critic and gallery owner, LTMH Gallery, New York City

Thomas Sokolowski (moderator) renowned curator and scholar of contemporary art

This program is presented in conjunction with *The Word of God: Sadow Birk's American Qur'an* at The Warhol through May 1 and [Dis\[Locating\] Culture](#), *Contemporary Islamic Art in America* at Michael Berger Gallery through July 30.

The symposium is co-presented by The Warhol, Pittsburgh Middle East Institute, and Michael Berger Gallery

Seating is limited.

Tickets \$35/\$25 students; call 412.237.8300 or visit TicketWeb.com

This symposium will be accompanied by a free, live webcast viewable at www.warhol.org/webcast/. Additional Programs: Gallery Talks, Lectures, Public Dialogues, Poetry Readings, Youth Programs, and special Weekend Factory themes

Follow us on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) for developing details or visit www.warhol.org.

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The Warhol receives state arts funding support through a grant from the Pennsylvania Council on the Arts, a state agency funded by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania; the National Endowment for the Arts, a federal agency and The Heinz Endowments. Further support is provided by the Allegheny Regional Asset District.

THE WORD OF GOD: SANDOW BIRK'S AMERICAN QUR'AN



About The Andy Warhol Museum

Located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, the place of Andy Warhol's birth, The Warhol is one of the most comprehensive single-artist museums in the world. The Andy Warhol Museum is one of the four Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh. Additional information about The Warhol is available at www.warhol.org.

About Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh

Founded by Andrew Carnegie in 1895, Carnegie Museums of Pittsburgh is a collection of four distinctive museums dedicated to exploration through art and science: Carnegie Museum of Art, Carnegie Museum of Natural History, Carnegie Science Center, and The Andy Warhol Museum. In 2007, the museums reached 1.3 million people through exhibitions, education, outreach and special events.

Phone: 412.237.8300

Hours: Tues, Wed, Thurs, Sat and Sun 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.

Fri, 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.

Mon closed

Admission: Members – free

Good Fridays 5-10 p.m., Half-price Museum admission

Adults - \$15; Sr. Citizens - \$9; Children/Students - \$8

The Warhol Store/The Warhol Café – free