

Press Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Lisa A. Batitto, Public Relations Manager, Newark Museum
Phone: 973-596-6638, e-mail: lbatitto@newarkmuseum.org

Jerry Enis, Consultant, Herbert George Associates
Phone: 732-446-5400, e-mail: jerry@herbertgeorge.com

49 washington street
newark, nj 07102-3176

newarkmuseum.org
WEB

Newark Museum
FACEBOOK

Newark Museum Presents *And Never Elsewhere* Performance by Dahlia Elsayed October 10, 2014

NEWARK: The Newark Museum will kick off the Newark Arts Council *Open Doors Citywide Arts Festival* with a performance by Dahlia Elsayed, ***And Never Elsewhere***, on October 10, beginning at 4:15 pm in the Museum's Horizon Plaza. This performance will take a form of a procession to the Newark Public Library, bringing together two institutions that share the historical leadership of Newark's iconic cultural figure, John Cotton Dana. Dana began his tenure as the Director of the Newark Public Library in 1902 and then, in 1909, founded the Newark Museum.

In this performance Elsayed's will incorporate ***We Would Begin Our Own***, her installation of thirty yellow flags adorning the Plaza, recently created for the New Jersey Arts Annual: ***Ready or Not*** exhibition. Each flag consists of a verse or remix of lines appropriated from John Cotton Dana's 1917 essay "The Gloom of the Museum." Read individually or collectively, these flags make a cohesive poem, inspired by Dana's innovative practices and approaches in the fields of art, museums, education and public engagement. "In this essay," Elsayed explains, "Dana lays out a succinct critique of institutions and offers concrete suggestions for a new model of relations between objects, institutions and the public. In the poem, I re-shape his words to create something between a Newark artist manifesto, a love letter to a city, and a statement of solidarity with the institution that he profoundly shaped."

One of John Cotton Dana's approaches to democratizing the museum was to incorporate industrial design—common, everyday objects familiar to all people—into the displays, a standard most museums follow today. Considered radical for a time when the arts were primarily linked with wealth, Dana's distinct vision was manifested in the creation of a museum that operates beyond the static nature of its collection and offers a dynamic space where visitors engage directly with art. Whether through hands-on workshops, a satellite "branch museum" plan of traveling exhibitions showcased in public spaces including store fronts, libraries and schools, Dana's vision of a museum was a research center and a hub. Museums, according to Dana, should introduce other forms of engagement with art that go beyond observation.

In keeping with Dana's importance to the City of Newark and to the world of arts, museums and libraries, Elsayed will remove the flags from the site and distribute them among 30 participants who will carry them ceremoniously across the plaza and march up the block to the Newark Public Library. The artist will donate her work to the Library. This performance celebrates Dana's visionary philosophy and in his honor, this march symbolizes a commitment to carrying his profound legacy into the 21st century.

"Dana's library policy, where shared spaces and contact with books provide a framework of exchange and debate, infused and shaped his museum perception," said Shlomit Dror, Consulting Curator of American Art at the Newark Museum. "Elsayed's flag procession will revive Dana's notions about accessibility and emphasis on public engagement."

For additional information, follow the Museum on Facebook at [facebook.com/newark.museum](https://www.facebook.com/newark.museum) or Twitter at twitter.com/newarkmuseum; or by visiting www.newarkmuseum.org.

-- ## --

ABOUT THE NEWARK MUSEUM

The Newark Museum is located at 49 Washington Street in the heart of the Downtown/Arts District of Newark, New Jersey, between the Rutgers Newark Campus and NJPAC. The Newark Museum is 10 miles west of New York City and easily accessible by NJ Transit and PATH. The Museum is open all year round: Wednesdays through Sundays, from Noon – 5:00 p.m. Suggested Museum admission: Adults, \$12.00; Children, Seniors and Students with valid I.D., \$7.00. Newark Residents and Members are admitted free. The Museum Café is open for lunches Wednesday through Sunday. Convenient parking is available for a fee. The Newark Museum campus, including its collections, facilities, and other resources, is accessible to accommodate the broadest audience possible, including individuals utilizing wheelchairs, with physical impairments, other disabilities, or special needs. For general information, call 973-596-6550 or visit our web site, <http://www.NewarkMuseum.org>.

Newark Museum, a not-for-profit museum of art, science and education, receives operating support from the City of Newark, the State of New Jersey, the New Jersey Council on the Arts/Department of State — a partner agency of the National Endowment for the Arts, the New Jersey Cultural Trust, the Prudential Foundation, the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation, the Victoria Foundation, the Wallace Foundation and other corporations, foundations and individuals. Funds for acquisitions and activities other than operations are provided by members and other contributors.