



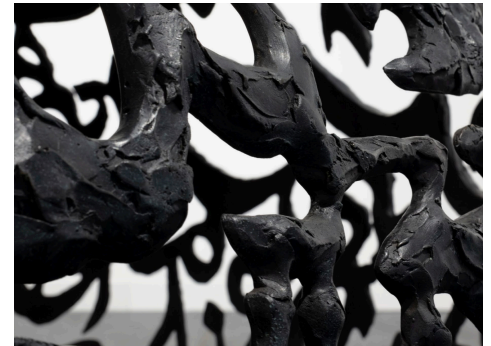
Big Rumi **Ghada Amer**

November 22nd, 2025 - March, 2026

Institute of Arab and Islamic Art at Ruth Wittenberg Triangle
421 6th Ave, New York, NY 10014, United States

IAIA is honored to present its inaugural Public Art program with *Big Rumi*, a sculpture by Ghada Amer, the artist's first public art installation in the United States of America. Ghada Amer frequently incorporates language—English, French, and Arabic—into her work, using the notions and nuances of translation to pull at the tensions of East and West that are ever-present throughout her practice. The latticework of *Big Rumi* (2024) is formed by the repetition of the Arabic quote attributed to the 13th century mystic poet, Rumi, which, translated into English reads: “You are what you seek” or “What you seek is seeking you.” Molding this text into spherical forms allows for repeated reflection on not only Rumi’s cryptic aphorism, but also on the very nature of language and translation. For Amer, this quote is particularly poignant and hopeful: In a world where so many are quick to ask for solutions or answers to our problems from external forces, it serves as a kind reminder of the value of self-reflection and self-trust.

Bio: In a practice that spans painting, sculpture, ceramic, garden, and installation, Ghada Amer pulls at the threads of cultural dualities—feminine and masculine, craft and art, figuration and abstraction, East and West—with sensitivity and specificity. Appropriating sexualized imagery—often sourced from pornographic magazines—Amer subverts the masculinist tropes that permeate them, reimagining women in moments of ecstasy, pleasure, and tenderness. Amer’s work is in public collections around the world including The Arab Museum of Modern Art, Doha; the Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago, IL; the Barjeel Art Foundation, Sharjah; the Brooklyn Museum of Art, New York, NY; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Chrysler Museum of Art, Norfolk, VA; Crystal Bridges Museum of American Art, Bentonville, AR; the Guggenheim Museum, Abu Dhabi; the Samsung Museum, Seoul; among others. She is regularly invited to prestigious group shows and biennials—such as the Whitney Biennial in 2000 and the Venice Biennales of 1999 (where she won the UNESCO Prize), 2005 and 2007. She was recognized with a mid-career retrospective at the Brooklyn Museum of Art in New York in 2008 and a larger, more extensive one at the MUCEM and across other venues in Marseille, France in 2022. Amer studied at the Villa Arson École Nationale Supérieure in Nice, France, at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, MA, and at the Institut des Hautes Études en Arts Plastiques in Paris. She lives and works in New York.



Mission

The Institute of Arab and Islamic Art (IAIA) is an independent, non-profit center that promotes and advances the artistic and cultural dialogue between New York City and the Arab and Islamic worlds. Through outreach programs, a multidisciplinary exhibition space, a knowledge-building facility, residency program and an emphasis on collaborations with cultural organizations, IAIA provides a convivial, welcoming environment to learn about and engage with an often over-simplified culture.

Contact IAIA

22 Christopher St, New York, NY

info@instituteaia.org

www.instituteaia.org