



THE GEORGE AND LISA ZAKHEM

KAHLIL GIBRAN CHAIR FOR VALUES AND PEACE



La Femme Découvre la Nature

ANNUAL REPORT

MAY 2017 - APRIL 2018



THE GEORGE AND LISA ZAKHEM
KAHLIL GIBRAN CHAIR
FOR VALUES & PEACE



COLLEGE OF
BEHAVIORAL &
SOCIAL SCIENCES

THE GEORGE AND LISA ZAKHEM
KAHLIL GIBRAN CHAIR FOR VALUES AND PEACE

COLLEGE OF BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

MAY 2017 - APRIL 2018

PREPARED BY
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@GIBRANCHAIR

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INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR

Editor's note (M. Dravis): This interview was conducted via e-mail in May 2018, after which the material was slightly edited for publication.

Q1: If the Gibran Chair's theme in 2016-2017 can be described as "purposeful relaunch," then perhaps the Chair's pattern in 2017-2018 could be characterized as "consolidation and enlargement," meaning consolidation of the Chair's traditional focus on the life and legacy of Gibran and enlargement of the Chair's mission to include international development.

Can you comment on some of the Chair's prominent activities under these two pillars, the academic study of Gibran and the policy-relevant work of development?

A1: What an excellent question! I do appreciate the themes you gave to the first year, "Purposeful Relaunch," and to the second year "Consolidation and Enlargement," because I think they capture in a very accurate way what happened in my first year as director of the Chair, and what is happening presently in my second.

In the second year, I restructured the Chair into two pillars: an academic one and an international development one. Both pillars are inspired by Gibran's writings, aspirations, and values.

Both aim at working with others to ensure that the values that emanate from social justice, equality, inclusiveness, valuing minorities, searching and highlighting the common ground, and of course recognizing the oneness of humanity, are adhered to.

Under the academic pillar, the Chair planned and organized the Gibran Third International Conference in partnership with the Center for Lebanese Heritage at the Lebanese American University. We held the conference in Beirut, Lebanon and we had professors and researchers from eight universities and several centers, institutes and organizations give lectures about Gibran.

Among the panelists and the audience several countries were represented, among them: Lebanon, the USA, England, Italy, France, Australia, Egypt, Tunisia, and Curacao. We discussed and analyzed the relevance of Gibran's writings to the issues of the twenty-first century, including the issues of equality and social justice. The conference was held in English and Arabic, and a book capturing the proceedings is forthcoming.

Under the international development pillar, we launched a project titled Women as Partners in Progress, and we are implementing it in three countries: Morocco, Jordan, and Kuwait. This project's focus is the advancement of the concepts of equity and equality in society, which parallels Gibran's emphasis on these issues in both his Arabic and English writings, in particular in his Arabic book "Al-Ajniha Al Moutakassira" (Broken Wings) and in "The Prophet".

Q2: The forthcoming proceedings of the Gibran Third International Conference span intellectual generations in that they include contributions by "founders of Gibran studies" like Roger Allen (who includes a warm tribute to the late Suheil Bushrui,* your predecessor as Chair director) as well as by younger, and even next-generation, Gibran researchers.

From your perspective, what are the major continuities—and differences, if any—in the research interests of long-established and more recent Gibran scholars?

* "This essay is dedicated to the memory of Suheil Bushrui, literature scholar and humanist."

A2: As you mentioned in your question, the forthcoming proceedings of the Gibran Third International Conference include articles by professors and researchers who span generations. Examples of contributions by researchers from different generations would be: the in-depth literary analysis of Gibran short stories by Professor Emeritus Roger Allen, who represents that intellectual generation of analysts and literary critics; and the amazing search and discoveries of the number of translations of the book *The Prophet* that was completed by two researchers—Francesco Medici and Glen Kalem—who represent a different generation fascinated by discoveries uncovered, especially, by the use of technology.

Q3: The Gibran Third International Conference is an excellent example of the organic and functional links between the Gibran Chair and Lebanon in that it took place in Beirut under the co-sponsorship of the Chair and the Center for Lebanese Heritage of Lebanese American University.

The Center for Lebanese Heritage operates under the direction of Henri Zoghaib; what roles do intellectual organizations—and individual intellectuals—play in the cultural life of Lebanon?

A3: As you stated, the Gibran Third International Conference is truly an excellent example of the strong organic links between the Gibran Chair and Lebanon. In addition to having the Center for Lebanese Heritage at the Lebanese American University co-sponsor with us, the Gibran Chair also partnered with: the Gibran National Committee of Lebanon; at least four other universities in Lebanon; and several other institutions. It was amazingly satisfying for all of us to come together to celebrate this towering figure from Lebanon whose writings are about universal values and whose message is about love, oneness, unity in diversity, and peace. You also ask about the role of the individual intellectual in Lebanon such as Henri Zoghaib. You would be surprised about the powerful role of intellectuals within Lebanese society. When I was growing up in Lebanon, and in particular in the 1960s and early 1970s, intellectuals such as Onsi El-Hajj, Said Akl, and Adonis—just to cite a few—were the powerful voices that influenced the thinking of the younger generations. These were voices that called for separation of church and state, equality, modernization of literature, and total freedom of expression. In those days, the university students in Lebanon were very influenced by such intellectuals.

I believe that in this twenty-first century Lebanese university students continue to be influenced by intellectuals, but possibly not quite to the same extent. What facilitates this continuing influence is that many of today's leading intellectuals, including Henri Zoghaib, also happen to be media personalities and, therefore, they command platforms with a wide reach.

Q4: Turning to the Gibran Chair's international development pillar, what have been some of the main accomplishments to date of the Chair's flagship development initiative, Women as Partner in Peace?

And how do you think that this project is different from other women-oriented international development projects?

A4: Our project is funded by the state department's U.S.-Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI). It is a regional project for the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region and is being implemented in three countries: Morocco, Jordan, and Kuwait.

We launched the project in each country by delivering a Knowledge Seminar involving 30 women leaders who are selected from different sectors of society. The synthesis of qualitative and quantitative research that is presented and discussed during the seminar is about gender roles in the Arab world in general, and within each one of the three countries in particular.

During each country seminar, we discuss the intersection of gender roles with the political, economic, education, health, and law sectors. We also discuss advances in gender equality as well as constraints that hinder and delay progress.

During the course of its Knowledge Seminar, each group of women leaders select two priority topics that they will work on for the next 18 months. Once they select their causes, the groups write a plan of action and commit to it.

To date, I would list the major accomplishments of our project as follows:

- Three Knowledge Seminars delivered, one in Rabat, the second in Amman, and the third in Kuwait City;
- Three country-specific Action Plans have been written;
- Six topics have been selected as priority issues to be addressed and advanced;
- In all three countries, male allies are joining the innovative work being done by these women leaders;
- In all three countries, traditional and social media are covering these initiatives; this media is country-based, Middle East-based, and even globally based (I have been interviewed by the BBC about the WPP);
- Change is happening on the ground in each country, and we hope that such change will have a multiplier effect throughout the MENA region and even the wider Middle East.

You ask how is this project different from other women's projects. It is different in so many ways, but maybe the most important difference is that this project is growing organically. The 30 women leaders in each country make the decisions about what they will engage. Key decisions are not made by either the funder (MEPI), or even the main designer/implementer of the project (the Gibran Chair at UMD). They are made by each group of 30 women leaders after they analyze conditions and constraints in their country. The project is completely evidenced based and is seriously field driven.

Q5: As director of the Gibran Chair, you spend a great deal of time thinking and speaking about his life and legacy. Do you have a sense of what Gibran himself thought his greatest legacy would be?

A5: I am sure, each one of us who specializes in Gibran will answer this question differently. From my perspective, Gibran would have thought that his greatest legacy is to define the unity of humanity through the love that unites people regardless of their social, economic, cultural, or ethnic background. ■



MAY RIHANI
DIRECTOR



THE THIRD GIBRAN INTER- NATIONAL CONFERENCE

JANUARY 4-6, 2018
BEIRUT, LEBANON

'The Third Gibran International Conference: Kahlil Gibran, Lebanon's Message to the World' was planned and organized by the [Gibran Chair for Values and Peace](#) at the University of Maryland (UMD), and the [Center for Lebanese Heritage](#) at the Lebanese American University (LAU), in collaboration with the [Gibran National Committee of Lebanon](#).



The Conference took place on January 4, 5, and 6 at the Ras Beirut campus of LAU. The keynote speaker at the Opening Ceremony was Professor Philip Salem, Director Emeritus of Cancer Research at Baylor/St. Luke's Episcopal Hospital in Houston and is the President of Salem Oncology Center.

Henri Zoghaib from LAU, and May Rihani from UMD, opened and closed the Conference.

Five panels were delivered during the first two days. The panelists came from Lebanon, the United States, Italy, and Australia. Eight universities and six organizations participated in the conference.

The five panels were: Gibran the Multifaceted Pioneer, The Relevance of Gibran's Spiritual Values, Impact and Influence of Gibra, Gibran the Visionary, and The Ongoing Discoveries.

Professor Roger Allen and Dr. Alexandre Najjar delivered their presentations during the first panel: *Gibran the Multifaceted Pioneer*; the moderator for this first panel was Professor Zahida Darwish Jabbour.

The speakers of the second panel: *The Relevance of Gibran's Spiritual Values*, were: Reverend Paul Gordon-Chandler and professor Tanios Njeim. This panel was moderated by Mr. Sejean Azzi. Professor Wail Hassan and Professor Ahyaf Sinno presented during the third panel: *Impact and Influence of Gibran*. Mr. Charbel Fakhry moderated this panel.

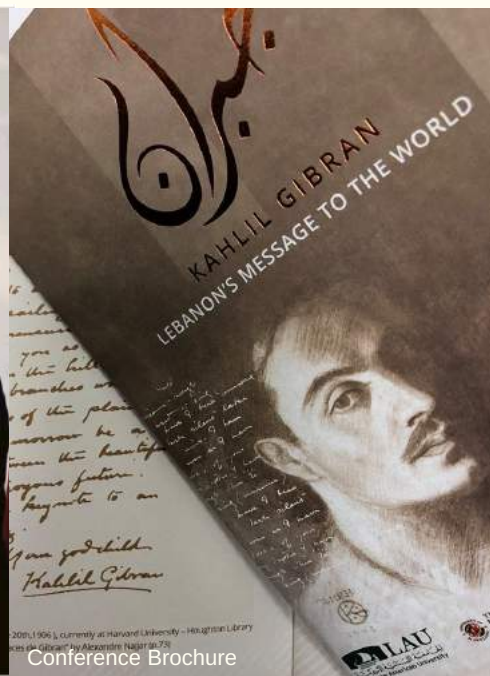
Gibran the Visionary was the fourth panel and the speakers were: Dr. Wafa Berri and Dr. Nidale Amyouni Daccahe, the moderator was Dr. Latif Zeitounu.

The final and fifth panel, *The Ongoing Discoveries* was moderated by Dr. Guita Hourani and the panelists were: Mr. Francesco Medici, Ms. Tania Sammons, and Mr. Glenn Kalem.

The third day of the Conference, the organizers and the panelists visited two museums, Gibran's Museum in Besharri, and Ameen Rihani's museum in Freike. The Lebanese television stations, as well as Lebanese daily newspapers extensively covered about the three days of the Conference and online media took the conference globally. Coverage on Twitter and Facebook was also extensive. ■



Dr. Philip Salem, Keynote speaker



Conference Brochure



May Rihani delivering her welcoming remarks



WOMEN AS PARTNERS IN PROGRESS: AN INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

OCTOBER 2017
COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND

The Women as Partners (WPP) Project was launched in **October 2017** under the International Development pillar of the Gibran Chair.

A **\$2.5 million two-year** project, WPP is funded by the **Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)** in the **U.S. Department of State**. This contract between MEPI and the University of Maryland is renewable for up to **\$ 6.250 million** over five years.

Women As Partners in Progress works in three countries in: Morocco, Jordan, and Kuwait. The goal of WPP is to amplify the voices of women and to support women leaders in the issues they choose to advance progress for women and thereby for their country. The premise of WPP is that Arab women know what needs to change and they have worked in organizations and with allies for many years to achieve noteworthy milestones. The project works with partner organizations in the three countries to promote women's leadership and gender inclusive policies. Our three partners are: [Jossour FFM](#) in Morocco, [The World of Letters](#) in Jordan, and [Abolish 153](#) in Kuwait.



**ABOLISH
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The first goal of WPP is knowledge: there are a plethora of studies on gender roles in the Middle East by local, regional and international sources. The staff of WPP, Janelle Thompson, Mona Rezvani, and Aina Krupinski-Puig, assisted Director Rihani in compiling the research that exists to create synthesized research documents that are both qualitative and quantitative and represent local and international sources.

This synthesized research, coupled with a Gender Analysis paper by May Rihani, is presented to a group of 30 women leaders who attend a three-day Knowledge Seminar in each of the three countries. The 30 women leaders who attend the Knowledge Seminar are selected to form a highly diverse group. They comprise established and emerging women leaders, from both urban and rural areas, and they represent a diversity of sectors: government, academia, media, business, the judiciary, women's NGOs, etc.

At the Knowledge Seminar, facilitated by May Rihani, the women leaders are presented with the synthesized research and the Gender Analysis. They discuss the knowledge presented, analyze obstacles to women's progress, and then identify key issues that they agree must be addressed to impact women's daily lives in their country. Through a transparent voting system, they agree on up to three issues that they commit to working on together for the remainder of the two-year WPP project. They then develop an Action Plan that guides their implementation together.

The Knowledge Seminar is adapted to each country's context. In Morocco, the two issues chosen at the December 2017 Knowledge Seminar were: 1) Violence Against Women (at home, at work, in the street, and in the workplace); and 2) Equality and Citizenship. An example of an activity to address the key issue of Equality is working with university students and faculty at a local university to produce twelve YouTube videos that address the issue of equality, one featured each month of the year. Another example is the drawing in of relevant experts to study the new 103-13 law that relates to domestic abuse and to study its impact on domestic abuse survivors. They then turn their learning into an advocacy position and meet with parliamentarians to advocate further for improvements in defining domestic abuse as a crime and implementing the 103-13 law through improved practices by police and the courts.

The Knowledge Seminar in Jordan was held in March 2018 and its very diverse group of 30 women leaders included three Senators, the country's first female pilot, the CEO of a major bank, and five senior women from rural governorates. One of the Senators, Senator Haifa Hajjar Najjar, gave the opening Keynote address.

The two issues chosen by the women leaders were 1) To increase opportunities for women to enter and remain in the workforce: and 2) To influence the Ministry of Education to reform textbooks in Jordan so that the portrayal of women and men as well as girls and boys reflects the value of equality, however, the approach chosen to work on these issues was a national mobilization campaign. The Knowledge Seminar in Kuwait took place in May 2018, and the two issues selected by the women leaders were: 1) Supporting the government in Increasing the percentage of women nominated to decision-making positions; and 2) Changing the traditional mind-sets of men and women regarding gender roles and in particular the issue of the glass ceiling.

WPP is presently preparing to run three-day Leadership Workshops in each of the three countries. Morocco's Leadership Workshop will be held in September 2018.

A month before the project ends, in August 2019, a final conference will be held in Amman, Jordan for all of the women leaders from each country and also the allies, women and men, with whom they have worked. This conference will be a time for sharing results and networking. To support these networks beyond the life of the project WPP will develop an online Hub to provide a networked community of WPP participants as well as a resource of all the research documents and records produced during the life of the project. ■



Group photo of the women leaders who participated in the WPP Knowledge Seminar in Rabat in December 2017

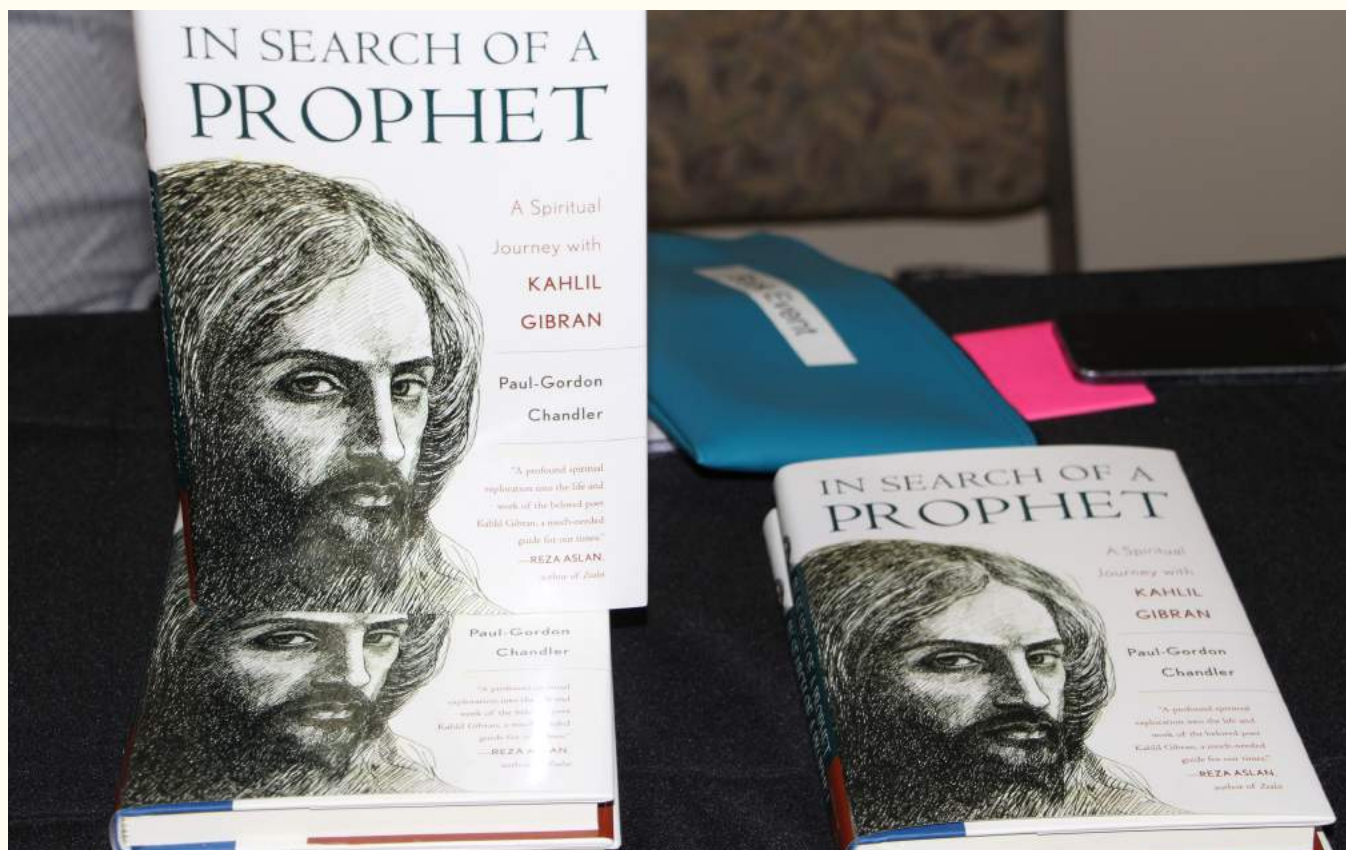


Group photo of the women leaders who participated in the WPP Knowledge Seminar in Amman in March 2018



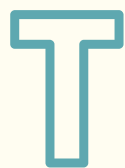
WPP Director May Rihani and Deputy Director Patricia Fleuderman at the MEPI Implementer's Conference in October 2017

IV. THE GIBRAN CHAIR CULTURAL EVENTS AND LECTURES



I. IN SEARCH OF A PROPHET: A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY WITH KAHLIL GIBRAN

WITH REV. PAUL-GORDON CHANDLER
SEPTEMBER 2017
COLLEGE PARK, MARYLAND



he George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace organized an event about Gibran Kahlil Gibran on the occasion of the newly

published book: "In Search of a Prophet: A Spiritual Journey with Kahlil Gibran", authored by Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler.

On Wednesday, September 27, 2017, the Dean of the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS), Dr. Gregory Ball, welcomed audience members to the University and introduced them to the College's three Peace Chairs; The Gibran Chair for Values and Peace directed by May Rihani, The Baha'i Chair for World Peace directed by Hoda Mahmoudi, and the Anwar Sadat Chair for Peace and Development directed by Shibley Telhami, who was in attendance.

On the subject of the three Peace Chairs, Dean Ball said: "One of the important things about the Peace Chairs is that they provide a vehicle to challenge students in a secular university setting concerning some of the biggest questions we face today." "Each of these questions" he continued, "relates to our values and how we treat others; what is required to generate a peaceful society, and what our responsibilities to others are."

Dean Ball highlighted that the Gibran Chair aims to bring Gibran's work- his vision, thoughts, and writings- to the forefront in a scholarly manner and to present them in a modern context.

The Director of the Gibran Chair, May Rihani, then framed the event in her opening remarks. Ms. Rihani stated that Kahlil Gibran is the third best-selling author in the world after Shakespeare and Lao Tzu and that Gibran's book

"The Prophet" to date has been translated into a large number of languages.

Director Rihani captured the essence of the lecture by saying, "Gibran truly believed that all human beings are brothers and sisters regardless of race, religion, or ethnicity. He believed in what I call the Oneness of Humanity." She further expressed that the Gibran Chair's programs are inspired by Gibran's vision and "that is why we study cultural pluralism; examine common ground among different civilizations; research how to deepen cross-cultural understanding; reflect on how to transcend the barriers of East and West; and revisit poetry, literature, and art as connectors within our Global Village." She continued to say, "today's lecture by Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler fully falls within this framework."

Rev. Chandler began his presentation by reminding his audience of two things. First, that Gibran's work should be "savored" and not "absorbed too quickly". He said, "The profundity and the style of his writing necessitate a contemplative approach to his work where you savor them little by little, relishing them as the treasures they are." He continued, "You can not move through the journey quickly. For me, it's been a long captivating journey to discover."

Second, Rev. Chandler noted that sometimes something written long ago becomes seemingly more relevant than it was during its own day. "And now more than ever", Rev. Chandler said, "there's a need to hear voices to call us to unity and to respect, to inspire to look deeply and generously in our thinking and actions toward the Other, whoever the Other is." Kahlil Gibran, to Rev. Chandler, would be just that voice of guidance for us.

To write "In Search of a Prophet", Rev. Chandler savored Gibran's work chronologically at the locations where Gibran had written them. Additionally, he read biographies and visited museums and monuments from Bsharri, Lebanon to Mexico City, Mexico.

Rev. Chandler stated that Gibran consistently succeeded at "drafting poetic invitations to journey toward the depths of one's self, exploring the rich reservoir within."

Regarding that, he quoted Gibran's "The Prophet," "Only when you drink from the river of silence shall you indeed sing."

As Director May Rihani said in her opening remarks, "By revisiting Gibran's work, Rev. Chandler brings him to life for us, shedding new light on this famous writer and social change advocate."

After the lecture, Rev. Chandler and the audience engaged in a dynamic and thought-provoking question and answer session. Questions from the audience came from scholars on Gibran's work and others who were not as familiar with his life and legacy.

Following the Q&A, a book-signing session took place as well as a reception. ■



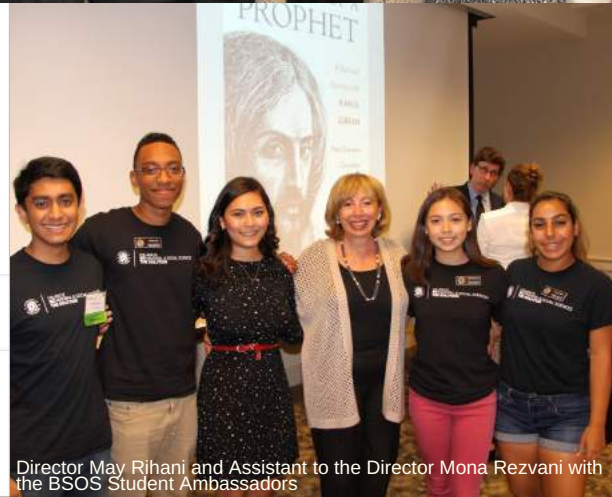
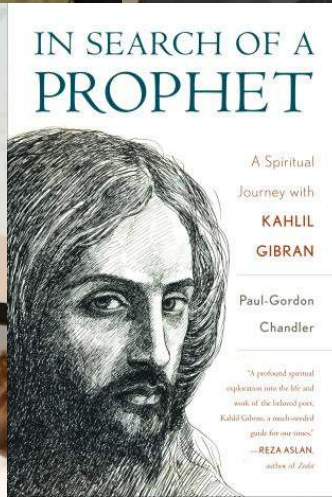
Dr. Fatemeh Keshavarz during the lecture's Q&A session



Dean Gregory Ball, Rev. Paul Gordon Chandler, Dir. May Rihani, and Ambassador Carla Jazza



Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler and Director May Rihani



Director May Rihani and Assistant to the Director Mona Rezvani with the BSOS Student Ambassadors



2. A CULTURAL EVENING WITH THE LEBANESE EMBASSY

NOVEMBER 7, 2017
RESIDENCE OF THE LEBANESE AMBASSADOR
WASHINGTON D.C.



On Tuesday, November 7th, at the residence of the Lebanese Ambassador in Washington D.C., over 100 guests gathered for a cultural event to celebrate the author and poet Kahlil Gibran. This event was a collaboration between Ambassador Carla Jazzar, Chargé d’Affaires ad.interim. of the Embassy of Lebanon in Washington D.C. and the Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace. The gathering reflected a deep love for Lebanon and respect for Gibran and his work.



Ambassador Carla Jazzar, Chargé d’Affaires of the Embassy of Lebanon in Washington D.C. welcomes guests at the event

The theme of the night was Gibran and his dear Lebanon. The event opened with remarks by Ambassador Jazzar, who spoke on the importance of Gibran’s message of peace, cultural interconnectedness, and her appreciation for the arts, specifically music. To Gibran, melodies form a wordless language of the spirit that supports self-reflection and dialogue with others. Gibran’s first book in Arabic, "Al-Musiqah", published in 1905, was about music.

Ambassador Jazzar concluded her remarks by paying her respects to Professor Emeritus Suheil B. Bushrui, a “beacon of cultures and languages,” in recognition of his outstanding services to world peace and his contributions to both Gibran and Arabic literary studies. The Ambassador dedicated the event at the Lebanese Embassy to his memory.

The Director of the Gibran Chair, May Rihani, echoed Ambassador Jazzar’s sentiments about Gibran, adding that “Gibran is international because of his message of the Oneness of Humanity”. “This message”, she said, “resonates with individuals and communities around the world.” Rihani then shared her perspective on those disparate elements that influenced Gibran’s life, noting that Lebanon, nature, tragedy, women, and the intersection of East and West were among those influences that marked him deeply.

Great figures from the East and the West inspired Gibran and shaped his vision, including: Nietzsche, William Blake, Tagore, Auguste Rodin, Henri David Thoreau, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Ameen Rihani, Ibn Al-Farid, and Abdu’l-Baha. Rihani concluded by stating that due to Gibran’s universal message, the University of Maryland established a Chair in his name. The University holds the only Chair in the world crowned with the name of this universal figure and “Lebanese giant.” The Chair pays homage to Gibran’s legacy, Rihani noted and it furthers the study of Values and Peace, “two international aspirations so relevant in these turbulent times of the 21st century.”



Rev. Paul Gordon Chandler and Director May Rihani deliver their remarks

Featured at the event was Rev. Paul-Gordon Chandler, founding president of CARAVAN arts and author of "In Search of a Prophet". Rev. Chandler spoke about his book and the journey he went on to connect with the all-embracing spirituality of Kahlil Gibran. Rev. Chandler explored how Gibran, an "East-West figure can be a much-needed guide for our time." He also related peace and harmony to building bridges between creeds of the Middle East and the West.

Members of the choir of Our Lady of Lebanon, a Maronite church in Washington D.C., accompanied the melodies. Among those melodies were: "Kan Li Bil Amsi" (Yesterday, I Had), "A'tini Elnay" (Give Me the Flute), "Lamma El Watan" (When the Country), and "Ya Bani Oummi" (Citizens of My Country), as well as "Sakan El Layl" (The Silence of the Night) which was inspired by Gibran's writings. ■

The presentation was followed by a live performance of Gibran's poetry put into songs, performed by two Lebanese-American vocalists: Cynthia Samaha and Raymond Ghattas.



Vocalists Raymond Ghattas and Cynthia Samaha standing in a room dedicated to Kahlil Gibran



Choir members standing behind the audience during their performance at the Lebanese Embassy



Vocalist Cynthia Samaha during her performance



Rev. Paul Gordon Chandler, Dir. May Rihani, Ambassador Carla Jazzar, and Dean Gregory Ball



Members of the choir of Our Lady of Lebanon



3. KAHLIL GIBRAN, ART & INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT: A PANEL & GALLERY FOR BSOS INTERNATIONAL WEEK

MARCH 28, 2018
GLOBAL CROSSROADS ATRIUM
H.J. PATTERSON HALL
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

Forty people gathered at the Global Crossroads Atrium in H.J. Patterson Hall on Wednesday, March 28th, when they saw nearly 30 books artfully displayed.

These books, some published as early as 1947, were written by or about the Lebanese American poet and artist Kahlil Gibran. On display, above them stood 18 Collector's Edition copies of Gibran's most prominent paintings.

This gallery was created as part of a BSOS International Week event, organized by the BSOS Dean's Student Advisory Council (DSAC). This weeklong on-campus celebration was created to highlight the international work by departments and Chairs within the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS). Among other international organizations, The Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace was invited to take part in International Week activities and prepared two activities:



First, the aforementioned gallery and display on Gibran, and second, a panel and presentation on the various activities of the Gibran Chair over the last two years. Panelists included Gibran Chair Director May Rihani, Deputy Director of the International Development program "Women As Partners In Progress" (WPP), Patricia Flederman, and Assistant to the Director and the Chair's social media coordinator, Mona Rezvani.

Director Rihani greeted the audience and delivered opening remarks welcoming BSOS Dean Gregory Ball to the stage. Dean Ball introduced the College's Peace Chairs and briefly spoke of the importance of studying universal values addressed in Gibran's writings. Kanta Mendon, a representative of DSAC, then spoke about BSOS 's International Week events.



Gibran Chair director May Rihani delivers her opening remarks

Next, Director May Rihani shared her vision of the Gibran Chair, and sketched some of the Chair's academic activities. Those activities included the Third International Gibran Conference in Beirut, Lebanon in January 2018, a cultural event at the Lebanese Embassy in November 2017, and a symposium on the contributions of Arab women to peace in December 2016.

Patricia Felderman then took the stage and described the activities of "Women As Partners in Progress" (WPP), the International Development program and the Chair's second pillar. She presented an overview of WPP highlighting it as a new impetus by Arab women. The program's three focus countries are Morocco, Jordan, and Kuwait, and Ms. Flederman detailed the various activities in each country.

Finally, Mona Rezvani, Assistant to the Director and the Chair’s social media coordinator, presented on the Chair’s outreach and virtual presence on Twitter and Facebook, and how the Chair, through social media, is able to present live-coverage of its international peacebuilding initiatives.

The session ended with a Q&A in which the audience, students, and professors alike, asked thought-provoking questions.

Link: <http://go.umd.edu/f7h> ■



Gibran Chair Director May Rihani



A small gallery of books and paintings by or about Gibran, on display, at the event.



WPP Deputy Director Patricia Flederman



Dr. Gregory Ball, Dean of BSOS, during his opening remarks



Gibran Chair Social Media Coordinator Mona Rezvani



4. THE GIBRAN CHAIR AT MARYLAND DAY 2018

APRIL 28, 2018
MCKELDIN MALL
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK



In a sunny Saturday morning, the University of Maryland welcomed thousands of visitors to Maryland Day, the university's one-day celebration of learning and discovery. The 20th annual event was one to remember, with over 400 demonstrations, exhibitions, and performances. The Gibran Chair partook in the festivities along with a number of other groups within the College of Behavioral and Social Sciences Chairs and Departments.

The Gibran Chair booth had two activities. One was a "Make Your Own Poem" station at which passersby arranged pre-cut words into poetic combinations. They were asked to place their creations on a blackboard for others to read and enjoy. Over 50 poems were written throughout the course of the day, with many different writers contributing- from children to adults.

The other activity was a "Kahlil Gibran Trivia" game, with 10 questions about the poet's life and most famous works. Each question was assigned a number of points, which when added could lead to three different prizes: 5 points total awarded a "Maryland Alum" sticker, 10 points total awarded a handmade watercolor bookmark with Arabic calligraphy, and 15+ points awarded a book on the Second International Gibran Conference.

Our leaderboard of top players included 6 individuals who won bookmarks and 5 who won books, with the maximum score of the day at 20 points. Many more participated, resulting in all 40 handmade bookmarks being given away before the end of the day.

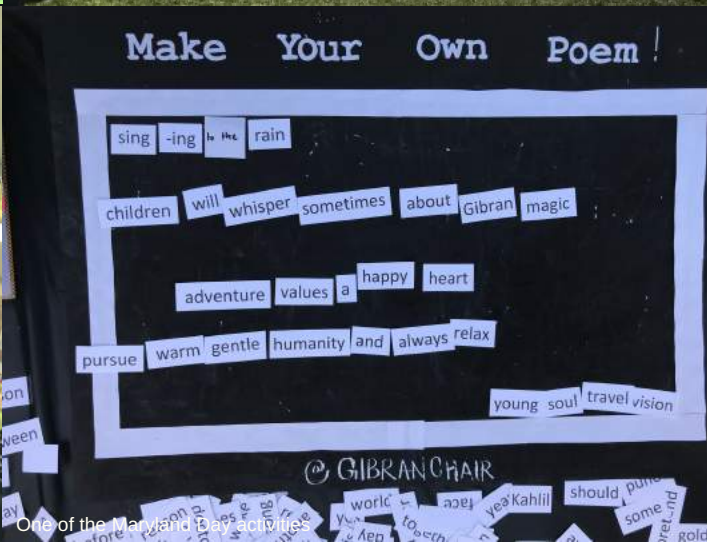
The booth of the Gibran Chair provided the visitors with an opportunity to learn more about Gibran, the great poet who believed in the oneness of humanity. ■



BSOS tents on UMD's Mckeldin Mall



Gibran Chair staff Aina Krupinski-Piig (right) and Mona Rezvani (left) at Maryland Day



One of the Maryland Day activities



Aina facilitating the Gibran Trivia game

V. LECTURES GIVEN BY THE DIRECTOR



1. “THE BASIC PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT” LECTURE AT THE COUNSELLING CENTER

OCTOBER 4, 2017
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND, COLLEGE PARK

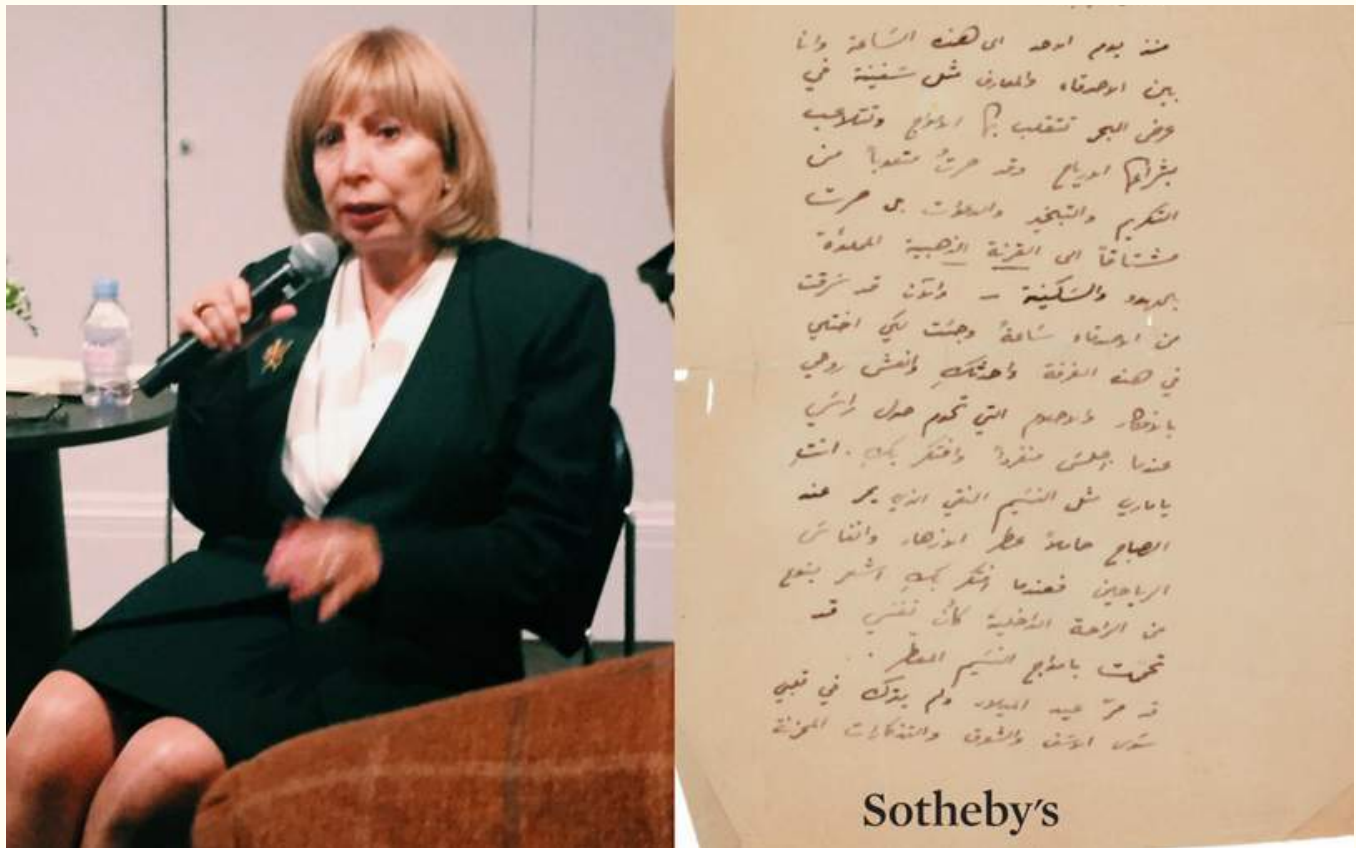
Director May Rihani was invited by Dr. Yu-Wei Wang, Research Director and Assistant Director of UMD's Counselling Center, to give a lecture entitled: "The Basic Principles that Guide International Development" on October 4th, 2017. Director Rihani was welcomed and introduced by the Director of the Counselling Center, Dr. Sharon Kirkland-Gordon.

Director Rihani spoke to an audience of around 30 counselors, based on her experience of over 35 years in international development and elaborated on basic principles such as:

- The power of ownership;
- Starting where the country's development level is at;
- An approach based on inclusivity of genders, sectors, and minorities;
- Acknowledging the complexity of cultures;
- Recognizing the progress made by countries and building on it;
- Active Listening;
- Letting sustainability be a major driving force;
- Innovation as a must; and
- The power of building partnerships.

A very dynamic discussion followed the presentation, the counselors asked several questions regarding international students and commented on how relevant and applicable these principles are in any setting that has a multicultural dimension. ■





2. FROM GIBRAN, WITH LOVE: 33 RECENTLY UNCOVERED LETTERS

SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL
 OCTOBER 27, 2017
 LONDON, UNITED KINGDOM

Recently, Sotheby's International contacted May Rihani, the Director of the Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace, to ask if she would analyze and interpret the significance of a set of letters from Kahlil Gibran that had suddenly seen the light of day. After Sotheby's received May Rihani's report, they invited her to London to give a talk about Gibran and his newly discovered letters.

Director Rihani gave her lecture on October 27th in front of an audience of Gibran enthusiasts. The more than 80 individuals in the audience included literature connoisseurs, art and book collectors, foreign dignitaries, scholars, and students. Mr. Edward Gibbs, Chairman Head of Department Middle East and India of Sotheby's, introduced Director Rihani and welcomed her to Sotheby's.

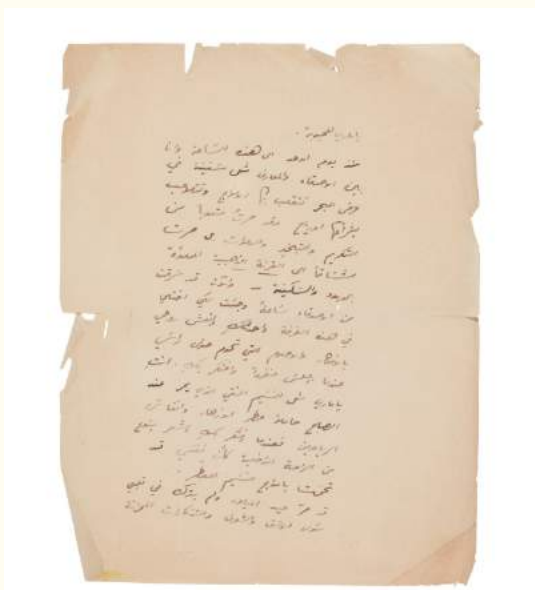
Ms. Rihani began her talk by giving an overview of the Gibran Chair at the University of Maryland, highlighted major phases of Gibran' life, and then spoke about the discovered letters.

The 33 letters were addressed to Mrs. Marie El-Khoury of New York City, and were written between 1908 and 1920. The set includes 29 Arabic letters and 4 English ones, penned by Kahlil Gibran during a significant period in his life; while he was publishing in both Arabic and English, and when he was exhibiting his art at galleries in New York and Boston. During these years, three of his famous books were published: "Spirit Rebellious," and "Broken Wings" in Arabic, and "The Madman" in English.

"Knowing who Marie El-Khoury was, and what she might have accomplished in her life is key to evaluating the significance of these letters and to recognizing the type of role she might have played in the life of the author of "The Prophet," said May Rihani.

"Gibran had several important and very significant friends and patrons who supported him in his work. It would be interesting to know if Marie El-Khoury played a role that influenced Gibran's thinking and writing."

After Director Rihani's talk, Mr. Ashkan Baghestani, Deputy Director of Contemporary and Modern Arab and Iranian art at Sotheby's opened the session to audience questions. Ms. Rihani was asked several questions including a request to read one of the letters she had translated from Arabic.



One of the 33 recently uncovered letters from Kahlil Gibran to Marie El-Khoury c. 1908 - 1920

Asked about Marie El-Khoury, Director Rihani explained that like Gibran, she (née Azeez) was born in Lebanon in 1883 and immigrated to the United States. Marie's family arrived to the US in 1891, when she was just 8 years of age. She attended Washington College and graduated in 1900 when she was 17 years old. She may have been the first Lebanese- or Arab-American woman to graduate from a U.S. college.

Her father started a quality jewelry store in lower Manhattan and moved it to Atlantic City, New Jersey. In 1902, Marie married a fellow immigrant but was widowed two years later. Her father died suddenly the following year, so she took over the family business, designing eye-catching pieces for women that were featured in "Vogue," "The New Yorker," "The Christian Science Monitor" and other journals. She took up writing and penned many short stories. She was a member of the board of trustees of the Metropolitan Museum of Art. She passed away in 1957 at the age of 74. El-Khoury's New York Times obituary hailed her as "one of this city's leading and original jewelry designers."

When asked more specifically about the content of the letters that Gibran wrote to Marie, Director Rihani said that "Gibran wrote to Marie about his newly published books as well as about his exhibits; he often mentioned how much he enjoyed and needed her company.

Gibran also makes it clear that spending time with her is uplifting to his spirits. He repeatedly expressed romantic feelings towards Marie."

In an answer to a question about the likelihood of finding more letters such as this collection, Ms. Rihani stated that she believes given the uniqueness of the discovery of these letters, it seems unlikely that a collection of Gibran letters of this nature will turn up in the future.

The interest in Gibran, his life, and his works was vibrant in the Sotheby's gallery where Ms. Rihani gave her talk. ■



Director May Rihani leading a discussion (left) and answering questions amid the audience (right) at Sotheby's International in London



3. WOMEN AND POLITICS INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

IBN ZOHR UNIVERSITY
OCTOBER 24-26, 2017
OUARZAZATE, MOROCCO

The Role of Universities in Advancing the Work of International Development Especially the Struggle for Gender Equality," was the title of May Rihani's talk at the International Conference on Gender and Politics, held in Ouarzazate , (known as the "door to the desert") a Moroccan town at the edge of the Sahara. Held on October 24 to 26 this year, the conference theme was "Women and Politics in an Age of Uncertainty: The Road to Sustainable Democracy and Democratization". The conference was organized through a partnership of two universities: the Ibn Zohr University in Morocco and the University of Wisconsin-Madison in the US. 12 Moroccan universities participated as well as 44 international universities from around the world, including 17 from the US.

May Rihani was invited to speak by, Dr. Rita Stephan, Director of the Middle East Partner Initiative (MEPI) in the US Department of State. Director Rihani's panel was entitled "The Role of International Institutions in Fostering Gender Equality in Relation to Democracy."

May Rihani highlighted the significant role many universities play in forming various kinds of partnerships to advance

International Development and their important contributions to the socio-economic analysis of gender inequality.

She championed those universities who understand their role as centers where younger generations learn to become future professionals in the field of International Development. Director Rihani also emphasized how universities can lead by example in ensuring respect for basic principles of International Development such as: gender equality, multicultural approaches, multidisciplinary techniques, and the value of diversity.

Professor Fatima Sadiqi from the University of Fez in Morocco gave the opening keynote address entitled: "New Post-Revolution Female Voice Recreating North African Feminisms from Within." After the conference, May Rihani met with the Gibran Chair's new Morocco partner, Jousour, for its International Development project Women as Partners in Progress (WPP). The goal of WPP is to strengthen the leadership, and amplify the voices of women in three Arab countries: Morocco, Jordan, and Kuwait. ■



MEPI Director Dr. Rita Stephan (far right) and Gibran Chair Directory May Rihani (left)



4. THE LEGACY OF DR. JAMIL JABRE

KASLIK UNIVERSITY
JANUARY 8, 2018
LEBANON

The Holy Spirit University of Kaslik in Lebanon invited Director May Rihani to give a lecture about Dr. Jamil Jabre, a well known Lebanese writer whose oeuvre includes a book about Gibran Kahlil Gibran and another book about Gibran and May Ziade.

On January 8th, Director Rihani gave her lecture at Kaslik University highlighting Dr. Jabre's contributions to Lebanese literature, including his in-depth studies and publications about Lebanese literary figures in Lebanon itself and in the diaspora. His articles, essays and books discussed the lives and works of figures such as Gibran, May Ziade, Ameen Rihani, Elia Abou Madi, Michel Chiha and Charles Corm.

The tribute ceremony for Dr. Jabre was on the occasion of the publication of his posthumous collection of writings entitled: "Al-Qalam Al-Mizan Al-Dafe", prepared and presented by Reverend Father Maroun Hayek.

The event was hosted by the Phoenix Center for Lebanese Studies (CPEL) at Kaslik University.

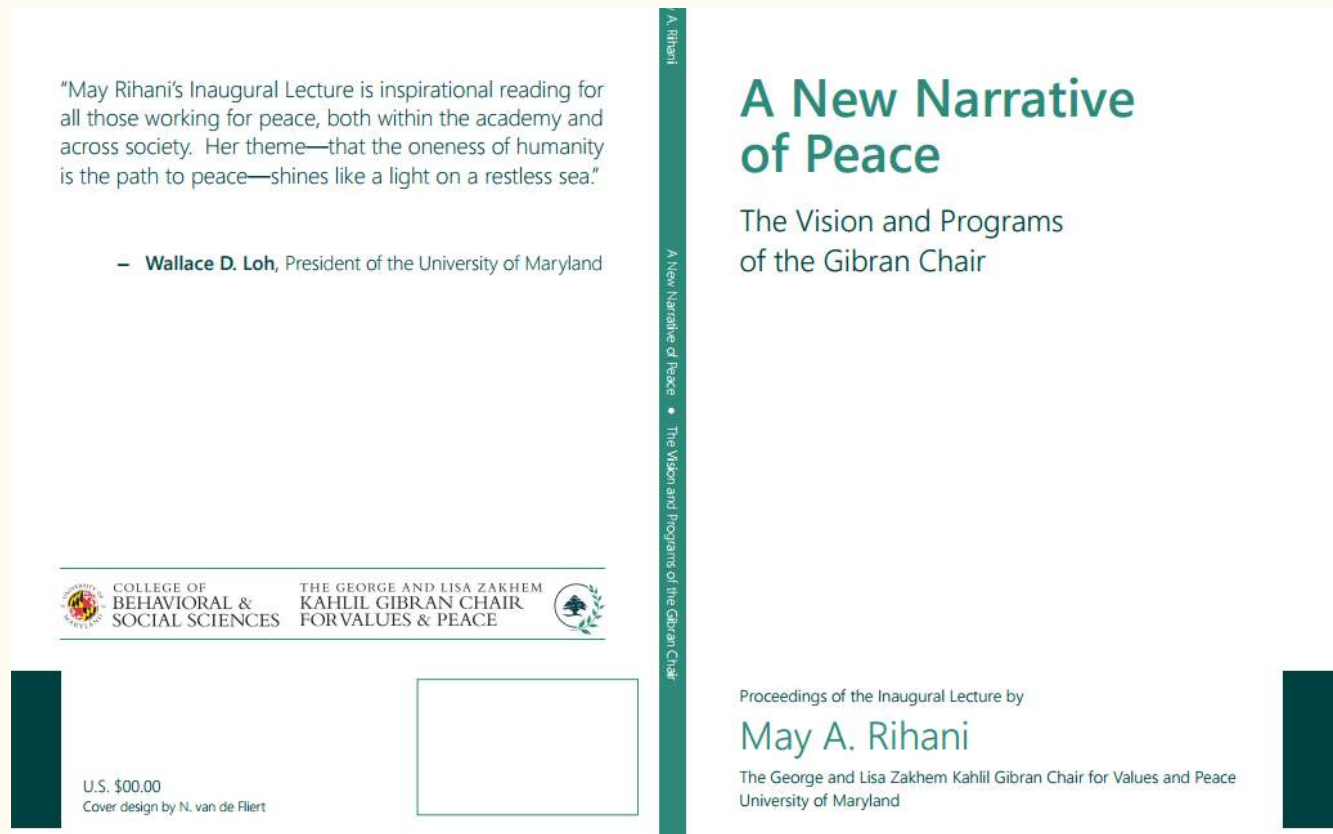
The program included presentations from:

- Mr. Melhem Antoun Riachy, Minister of Information;
- Dir. May Rihani, Gibran Chair, University of Maryland;
- Dr. Kamal Nakhla, researcher, media personality and MC of the event;
- Mrs. Salwa AlKhalil; writer; and
- Dr. Cesar Jabr representing the family. ■



May Rihani (far right) at the tribute for Dr. Jamil Jabre

VI. CHAIR AND CHAIR RELATED PUBLICATIONS

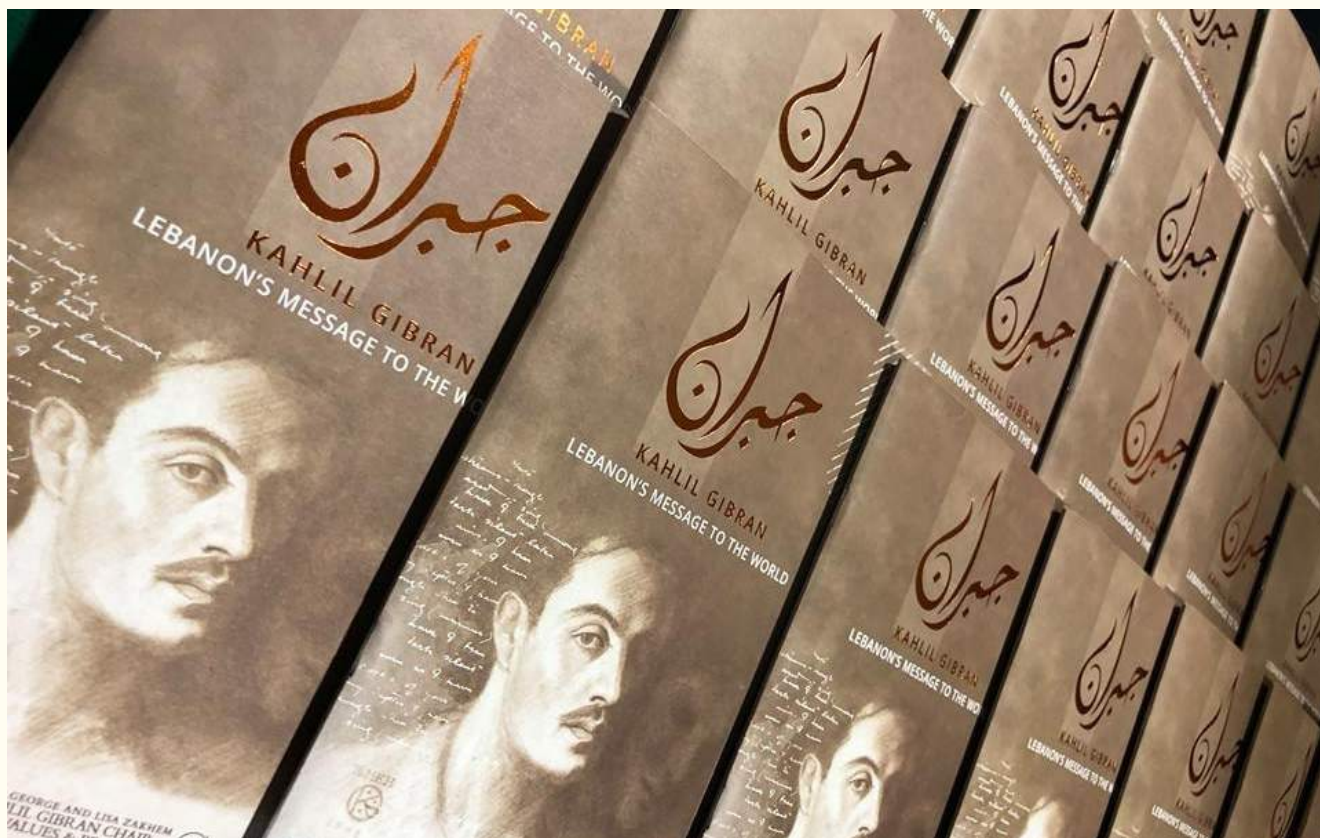


1. A New Narrative of Peace | June 2017

"A New Narrative of Peace: The Vision and Programs of the Gibran Chair" is the first publication produced during the tenure of May Rihani as the Director of the Chair. The book was published in June 2017 and highlights strategic and pragmatic approaches that make Peace more attainable. The Chair's vision of Peace is based on three principles: Social Justice, Valuing Diversity, and Ensuring Inclusivity in processes and decision making. Director May Rihani says in her book: "This elusive Peace that we all yearn for, despite all the obstacles that exist on the road towards it, is perhaps what is most needed in this century," and she continues to say: "there is a need to enhance opportunities for the younger generations to become visionaries and architects of a new narrative of Peace."

President Wallace Loh, of UMD, states on the cover of the book: "May Rihani's Inaugural Lecture is inspirational reading for all those working for Peace, both within the academy and across society. Her theme—that the oneness of humanity is the path to Peace— shines like a light on a restless sea."

In his introduction, Dean Gregory Ball writes: "The Gibran Chair is inspired by the life and writings of Kahlil Gibran, a true citizen of the world whose message of peace and love inspired whole generations." ■



2. Kahlil Gibran: Lebanon's Message to the World | January 2018

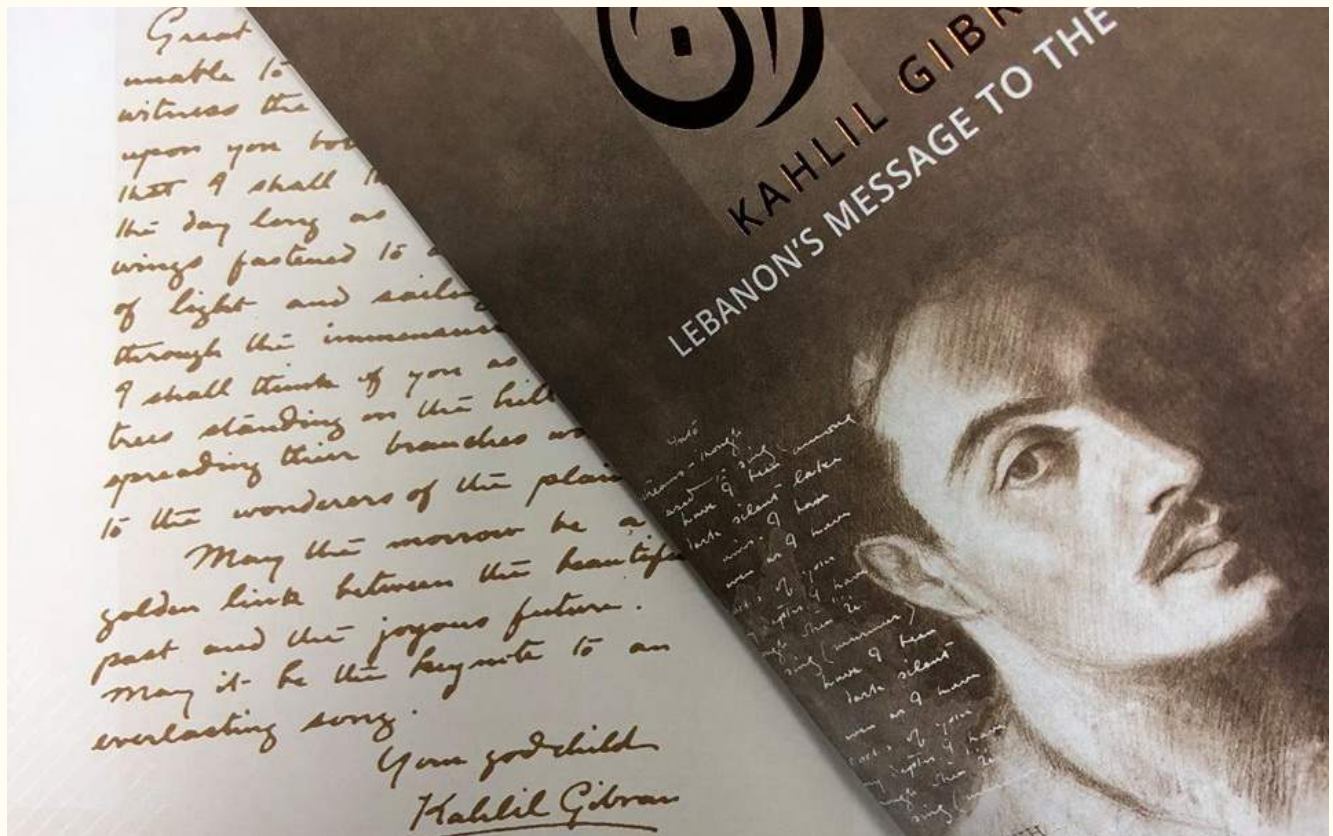
This publication is a booklet in both English and Arabic published by the Gibran Chair, the Lebanese American University (LAU), and the Gibran National Committee of Lebanon. The booklet was distributed to attendees of the Gibran Third International Conference in Beirut, Lebanon on January, 4, 5, and 6, 2018. The publication contains the detailed agenda of the three day Gibran Conference, a brief bio of every speaker and moderator, two copies of handwritten letters by Gibran (one in English and one in Arabic), three Gibran portraits, and most probably the last essay written by Professor Suheil Bushrui (in collaboration with Henri Zoghaib), entitled "The Permanence of Lebanon: Lebanon's Dialogue with the West' through the writings of Rihani, Gibran, and Naimy." ■



3. The Bulletin of Gibran Studies | January 2018

The "Bulletin"-of which this is the inaugural issue-is trilingual, and publishes articles and information about Gibran from different parts of the world in English, French, and Arabic. The "Bulletin" will appear every six months online. Some special editions, like this first one, will also be printed in hard copy. The Gibran Chair for Values and Peace will contribute material to each edition. For the first edition, The Chair contributed information about Sotheby's interest in Gibran's 33 unpublished letters to Marie El-Khoury; Director Rihani's lecture at Sotheby's regarding these letters; the cultural evening about Gibran at the Lebanese Embassy in Washington DC that the Gibran Chair helped organize; and the lecture by Rev. Paul Gordon-Chandler that the Chair organized at UMD.

Link: <https://issuu.com/lau-clh/docs/gibran-studies> ■



4. Forthcoming: **Proceedings of the Third Gibran International Conference**

The proceedings of the Third Gibran International Conference is forthcoming and will be published in 2018. The book will contain the 21 essays or presentations by panelists and moderators/discussants that were delivered during the conference in English and in Arabic. The book is titled: "Gibran: Lebanon's Message to the World" will also contain reproductions of several of Gibran's prominent paintings. This volume is edited by Henri Zoghaib, Director of the Center for Lebanese Heritage at the Lebanese American University, (LAU), and May Rihani, Director of the Gibran Chair at the University of Maryland. ■

VII. LIST OF PARTNERSHIPS

1. ROSHAN INSTITUTE FOR PERSIAN STUDIES (UMD)



Partnership:	Co-sponsor (Lecture)
Location:	College Park, MD
Description:	"A Vision for Global Understanding, Peace and Harmony" with Sri M
Date:	September 2017

2. SOTHEBY'S INTERNATIONAL

Sotheby's

Partnership:	Event/Lecture
Location:	London, UK
Description:	The Life and Oeuvre of Kahlil Gibran: 33 New Unpublished Letters
Date:	October 2017

3. JOSSOUR FFM



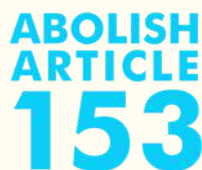
Partnership:	Grant
Location:	Rabat, Morocco
Description:	Implementers of WPP: Women As Partners in Progress
Date:	October 2017 - September 2019

4. WORLD OF LETTERS



Partnership:	Grant
Location:	Amman, Jordan
Description:	Implementers of WPP: Women As Partners in Progress
Date:	October 2017 - September 2019

5. ABOLISH 153



Partnership:	Grant
Location:	Kuwait City, Kuwait
Description:	Implementers of WPP: Women As Partners in Progress
Date:	October 2017 - September 2019

6. NOTRE DAME UNIVERSITY-LOUAIZE (NDU)



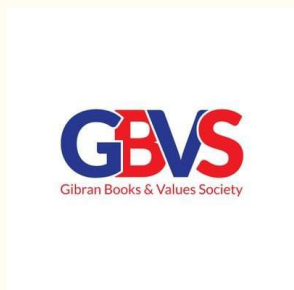
Partnership:	Co-sponsor (Event)
Location:	Louaize, Lebanon
Description:	Dialogue and Best Practice International Forum
Date:	November 2017

7. THE LEBANESE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY (LAU)



Partnership:	International Conference
Location:	Beirut, Lebanon
Description:	The Gibran Third International Conference
Date:	January 2018

8. THE GIBRAN BOOKS AND VALUES SOCIETY



Partnership:	Gibran Chair Director as Honorary International Adviser
Location:	Gombe, Nigeria
Description:	Expanding Kahlil Gibran's values at Gombe State University in Nigeria
Date:	March 2018

VIII. NEW SOURCES AND RESOURCES ABOUT GIBRAN



1. THE GIBRAN BOOKS AND VALUES SOCIETY

GOMBE, NIGERIA

The Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace is pleased to announce the establishment of a notable non-governmental organization in Gombe, Nigeria.

The Gibran Books and Values Society of Nigeria, or The Gibran Society, is an NGO that seeks to promote literacy, reading and ethics, guided by the universal message of peace, tolerance, and understanding enshrined in Kahlil Gibran's work.

The objective of the Gibran Society is "promoting the values embodied in the work of Kahlil Gibran," according to Professor Aliyu Yakubu Abdul, president and founder of the Society wrote to the Gibran Chair in January. He continued "We aim to emphasize reading and literacy as engines of individual and communal growth, especially among youths. In addition, we shall explore means of executing projects that shall foster education in general, peace, women's and girls' rights, environmental protection, children's safety, and positive value systems in institutions."

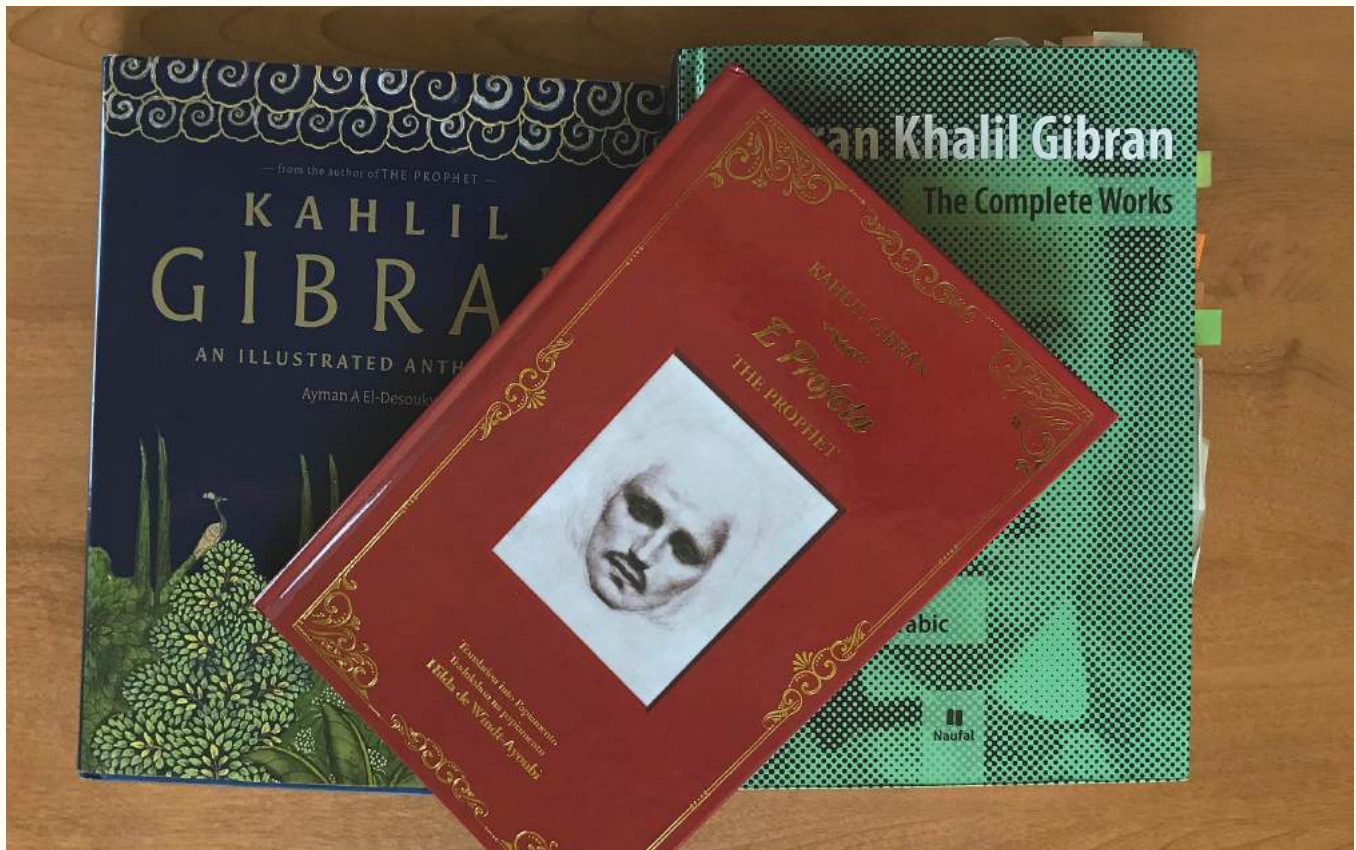
The core of this NGO is peace, diversity, and bridging the gap between nations. In his correspondence, Professor Abdul also wrote, "given Nigeria's diversity and its security challenges- which often result from failure to tolerate religious and cultural differences, we hope that the Organisation shall play a pivotal role in bringing Gibran's message of peace to our society."

The Gibran Society seeks to promote the example of Lebanon in hope of expanding understanding by Nigerian society of the Middle East. Professor Abdul wrote "besides religion, the Middle East has a rich cultural dimension that can inspire progress in our own society."

Regarding the role the Chair had in the establishment of the NGO, Professor Abdul wrote, "I must stress that Director Rihani's work at the Chair, and the very warm encouragement she has provided, has played a key role in inspiring us to get here. It is my hope that the Society shall be able to partner with the Chair, that we may continue to benefit from your expertise, experience, and overall passion for Gibran's work as a vehicle for world progress." The NGO gained formal certification from Nigeria's Corporate Affairs Commission in December 2017.

A notable ongoing project of the Gibran Society is a literacy Initiative that uses theater to promote literacy and education. The Society is working in Gombe State in northeast Nigeria in the Local Government Areas of Yamaltu-Deba and Dukku, regions that have the lowest literacy rates in the country and are home to the highest numbers of out-of-school children. The theatrical performances are stage adaptations of Gibran's "The Prophet". ■





2. 104 TRANSLATIONS OF 'THE PROPHET'

A few months before the Gibran Third International Conference that took place in Beirut Lebanon, two researchers-Glenn Kalem and Francesco Medici- assumed responsibility for tracking all published translations of Gibran's most famous book "The Prophet." Their research documented an astonishing number of translations. Medici and Kalem announced during the conference that they were able to track 104 published translations of "The Prophet" from the year it was published 1923 till January 2018.

They believe that there are even more translations and they are determined to continue their research. The details of their research to date will be published in forthcoming "Proceedings of the Third Gibran International Conference." ■

The University of Maryland, College Park

The University of Maryland, College Park (UMD) is one of America's leading academic centers for scholarship, education and public service. Ranked in the top tier of the nation's public research universities, UMD's faculty is known nationally and internationally for their myriad contributions to the fields of science, engineering, mathematics, computer science, economics, government, politics, international relations, sociology and the humanities. Located adjacent to the nation's capital, UMD draws to its campus a truly international student body and contributes its faculty's expertise to the development of national and international policy and public opinion through the major departments of national government and global institutions like IMF and World Bank. To learn more about UMD, please visit www.umd.edu

The College of Behavioral and Social Sciences

The College of Behavioral and Social Sciences (BSOS) is the University of Maryland's academic center for teaching and research in psychology, sociology, economics, government and politics, hearing and speech sciences, anthropology, geographical sciences, criminology and criminal justice and African American studies. The College increases understanding of and pursues innovative solutions to the challenges facing our global community, drawing on its Washington, D.C., and worldwide connections to enrich its teaching, research, and service. The BSOS community works to enhance international relations, advance global sustainability, understand societies and cultures and improve the human condition. The College aims to Be the Solution to the world's great challenges. To learn more about BSOS, please visit: www.bsos.umd.edu

The Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace

The George and Lisa Zakhem Kahlil Gibran Chair for Values and Peace at the University of Maryland is an endowed academic program that strengthens understanding between Eastern and Western cultures in general, and the Arab ethos and American values in particular. The Gibran Chair's active program addresses major global topics such as Studying the Pursuit of Peace; Exploring Paths toward Peace; Examining Common Ground; Understanding Cultural Pluralism; Highlighting the Contributions of Women toward Peace; Deepening Cross-Cultural Understanding; Transcending the Barriers of East and West; Revisiting Poetry, Literature and Art as Connectors within the Global Village; and Celebrating Universal Values. To learn more about the Gibran Chair, please visit: www.gibranchair.umd.edu

COLLEGE OF
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SOCIAL SCIENCES



Front cover:

Kahlil Gibran

Detail from *La Femme Découvre la Nature* (c.1913-1923)

Acrylic on canvas

THE GEORGE AND LISA ZAKHEM

**KAHLIL GIBRAN CHAIR
FOR VALUES AND PEACE**



**ANNUAL
REPORT**

MAY 2017 - APRIL 2018

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