

PRESS RELEASE



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Prince Claus Fund for
Culture and Development

Last chance! Cultural centre *Pages Bookstore Café* is looking for new home

“The important thing with Pages is the love. When we read books, we fall in love. When we see art we fall in love. Love is a very important thing...” – Samer Al-Kadri, Founder of Pages Bookstore Café

After five months of art, music, books and a lot of love, Pages Bookstore Café will be closing its doors at the Prince Claus Fund Gallery in Amsterdam on 26 October 2017. But the hunt is on for a more permanent Amsterdam venue.

In the months since this ‘pop-up’ Pages opened last June, it has become a popular hub, with an estimated 5,000 visitors so far, and more than 2,300 dedicated Facebook followers. People stop by not only for its collections of Arabic, Dutch and English books of all kinds, but also for its musical events, art exhibitions, language exchanges, poetry readings, workshops for children, open mic sessions, coffee and – especially - its warm and friendly atmosphere!

Samer Al-Kadri created the original Pages Bookstore Café in Istanbul to bring people together. He envisioned a relaxed space with books and spontaneous events, where displaced Syrians and locals alike could meet and get to know and enjoy each other’s cultures. It quickly became ‘home away from home’, a permanent fixture in Istanbul, and a hub in the heart of Amsterdam.

Pages Bookstore Café Amsterdam has been a collaboration between Samer Al-Kadri, the Prince Claus Fund and the Amsterdam Fund for the Arts (AFK) with support from the Lutfia Rabbani Foundation.

Time for a permanent space

Joumana El Zein Khoury, Director of the Prince Claus Fund: “Pages is another example of how the Prince Claus Fund gives an impulse to good, creative ideas. We’ve been happy to support Pages in Istanbul and again to assist Samer in starting up another Pages in Amsterdam. In just these first few months, Pages has shown how successful it is at bringing people together. We look forward to it finding a permanent home in Amsterdam.”

Back Story:

Samer Al-Kadri is a painter with a fine arts degree. Back in his home country, Syria, he established and ran a children’s publishing house. Before the revolution, his dream was always to create a cultural centre but when conflict started, he and his family had to flee. They landed in Turkey in 2013, where he and his artist wife Gulnar pursued that dream, setting up the first Pages Bookstore Café. They filled it with books from across the Arab world - the first Arabic bookstore in the city. Pages Istanbul became a space for artists, musicians, poets and story-tellers of all backgrounds, sometimes bringing as many as 15 nationalities together in one space. The Bookstore Café has helped bring Syrian refugees out of their isolation and connect them with their neighbours.

Samer believes there's a need for Pages Bookstore Cafés in cities all over the world. Once he finds a permanent space in Amsterdam, he will pursue plans to establish one in Berlin, and after that, he has his eye on New York.

Pages Bookstore Café Amsterdam (Pop Up)

Prince Claus Fund Gallery

Herengracht 603, Amsterdam

Free entrance, open daily through 26 October 2017

For the full programme visit:

<https://www.facebook.com/PagesBookStoreCafeAmsterdam/>

About the Prince Claus Fund and the AFK

The Prince Claus Fund actively seeks cultural collaborations founded on equality and trust, with partners of excellence, in spaces where resources and opportunities for cultural expression, creative production and research are limited and cultural heritage is threatened.

The Prince Claus Fund and the AFK started a new collaboration in 2017 to present international art and extraordinary creators in Amsterdam. Through this partnership, the Prince Claus Fund and the AFK have the following goal: creating and stimulating mutual inspiration and co-creation in the city, and setting new societal-cultural ideas.

In addition to hosting Pages Bookstore Café in its Gallery, the Prince Claus Fund is also a proud supporter of Pages Bookstore Café in Istanbul.

www.princeclausfund.org

www.afk.nl

Note for the editors

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