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MEDIA RELEASE

MoPA Presents

Beloved Daughters
Photographs by Fazal Sheikh

October 10, 2009 - January 31, 2010

(San Diego, CA) - For Immediate Release

EXHIBITION SUMMARY:

The Museum of Photographic Arts (MoPA) in Balboa Park is pleased to present *Beloved Daughters: Photographs by Fazal Sheikh*, a provocative exhibition of 70 photographs by the artist and activist, Fazal Sheikh. The exhibition is organized by Princeton University, and will be on view from Saturday, October 10, 2009 through Sunday, January 31, 2010.

EXHIBITION DETAILS:

Beloved Daughters unites two projects by photographer and activist Fazal Sheikh. Both projects were created over a span of two decades, and focus on women from two specific communities in India. The first project, *Moksha* (Heaven), portrays the northern Indian city of Vrindavan, where dispossessed widows go to devote themselves to Krishna and seek *moksha*: final release from the cycle of death and rebirth. Sheikh's next project, *Ladli* (Beloved Daughter) portrays the lives of girls and young women in a society where, despite progressive laws, their human, civil, and economic rights are routinely suppressed.

The two projects combined in this powerful exhibition provide intimate and revealing portraits of the faces and words of the old and young -- widows of great age, mothers and their children -- that paint an eloquent picture of women's prospects in modern India, a nation of 1.1 billion people. Sheikh pairs intense camera portraits with testimony from his subjects, offering a voice to those who would otherwise remain anonymous, conveying stories that are both eye-opening and thought-provoking.

"*Beloved Daughters* is in keeping with Fazal Sheikh's other photographic projects," states Carol McCusker, MoPA's Curator of Photography. "With this body of work, however, he takes us deeper into his commitment to under-represented communities. His calm, empathetic vision enhances our understanding, also given depth by the women's voices through writing."

MUSEUM OF PHOTOGRAPHIC ARTS

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ABOUT THE ARTIST:

Fazal Sheikh uses photography to create sustained portraits of communities around the world, addressing people's beliefs and traditions, as well as the political and economic problems of particular communities.

Since the early 1990s, Sheikh has focused attention on the experiences of people displaced from their homelands by a variety of causes. After photographing refugees from conflicts in Sudan, Ethiopia, Somalia, Mozambique and Rwanda, he traveled to northern Pakistan to encounter Afghans exiled by power struggles between the Taliban and the Mujahedeen. More recent projects have taken him to Brazil, Cuba and Mexico.

When *Moksha* was published in 2005, Sheikh was awarded both a MacArthur Foundation "genius" grant and the Henri Cartier-Bresson International Award. He immediately returned to India and undertook the work that became *Ladli*. The two projects were shown for the first time at the Henri Cartier-Bresson Foundation in Paris in the summer of 2007.

Sheikh was born in New York City in 1965 and graduated from Princeton University in 1987.

Press Opportunities:

Exhibition and installation images are available for press reproduction in various high resolution formats. Please contact Aki Martin, Marketing & Communications Coordinator at 619-238-7559, ext. 203 or via email (martin@mopa.org) with any press-related needs.

MoPA Information:

The Museum of Photographic Arts (MoPA) is one of the few museums in the country devoted to photography, film and video. Since its founding in 1983, MoPA has been dedicated to collecting, preserving and exhibiting the entire spectrum of the photographic medium. The museum's endeavors consistently address cultural, historical and social issues through its exhibitions and public programs.

Visit: mopa.org for information about exhibitions, programs and special events.

- **Hours:** Tuesday - Sunday 10 am-5 pm. Closed Mondays.
- **Gallery admission:** \$6 adults; \$4 students, seniors and military; FREE to members and children under 12. Admission is free to San Diego County residents and active military members on the second Tuesday of the month.
- **Docent Tours** for student groups (elementary through college) are available free of charge with advance reservations. Tours for non-students are also available, with advance reservations, at a discounted admission rate.

The Museum of Photographic Arts is accredited by the **American Association of Museums** and is a member-supported, private, non-profit institution. Additional support for museum programs is provided in part by the **City of San Diego Commission for Arts and Culture, the Joan and Irwin Jacobs Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation, the Weingart-Price Fund, the San Diego Foundation, Patrons of the Prado, and the National Endowment for the Arts.**

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