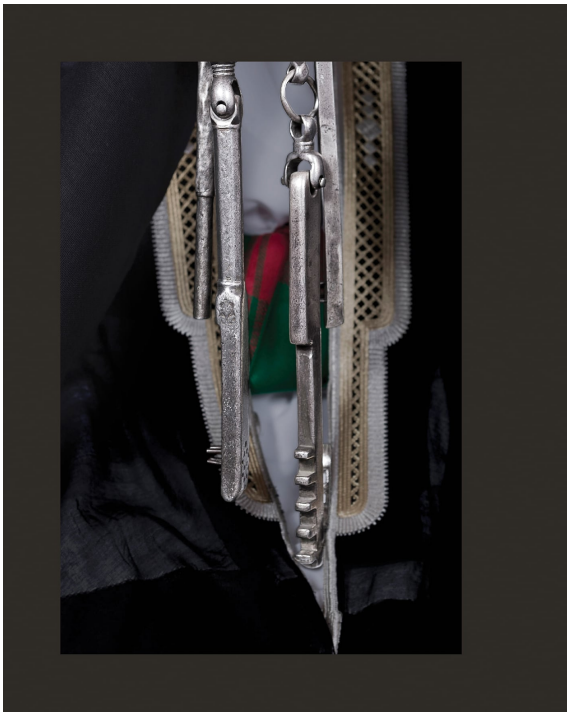
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Email: ussales@accartbooks.com
Web: https://www.accartbooks.com/us



A Tale of Two Keys

Adel Al Quraishi

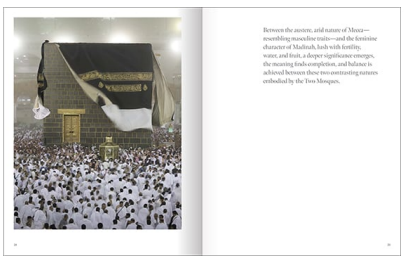
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- Unprecedented access: the only photographs ever taken of the Guardians of the Prophet's Mosque and the sacred keys in their care
- More than 100 images of places, objects and rituals rarely seen by any outsider
- A richly produced gift book built around a little-known story at the heart of Islam's holiest sites
- By the internationally exhibited photographer behind the acclaimed *The Guardians* and *Al Astar*
- Available in both English and Arabic editions

For more than eight hundred years, the Prophet's Mosque in Medina was tended by the Āghawāt: a secretive fraternity of eunuchs entrusted with the key to the Prophet's burial chamber. Today only one remains.

In ***The Tale of Two Keys***, Adel Alquraishi, the only photographer ever permitted to document these guardians, sets out to answer the question their existence poses: why were the keepers of Islam's holiest places required to be eunuchs? His investigation turns on two keys, one to the Prophet's Noble Chamber in Medina, one to the Ka'ba in Mecca. Through more than 100 photographs of places, objects and rituals rarely seen by any outsider, Alquraishi uncovers a hidden symmetry between the two sanctuaries, of male and female, one and many, that has shaped Islam's sacred geography for centuries. A landmark of access and artistry, and a companion to his acclaimed *The Guardians* and *Al Astar*.

Adel Al-Quraishi is a self-taught visual artist and photographer, born in the Saudi Arabian city of Al Khobar in 1968. His work has been exhibited around the world, most notably with his show *Tribe: Contemporary Photography from the Arab World* at American University Museum in Washington, DC in 2018.







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