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The Guardians

Adel Al Quraishi

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Size	10.63 in x 14.17 in
Pages	380 Pages
Illustrations	229 color, 8 b&w
Name of series	Holy Sites of Islam
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- Lavish, large-format, emphatically visually driven presentation
- Stunning photography of one of Islam's two great holy sites
- An exceptional project made possible only by permission of the Guardians of the tomb of the Prophet Mohammed

The Mosque in Madinah, which houses the tomb of the Prophet Mohammed himself, is second only to Mecca as the holiest point of pilgrimage in the Islamic world. The Prophet was born in Mecca and died in Madinah in the seventh century. The great Mosque has grown around his tomb and continues to spread at the heart of the city. For centuries the tomb has been watched over by a group of Guardians, brought originally from Abyssinia, who form their own closed society and exercise authority throughout the Mosque, carrying the keys to the tomb. The current generation of Guardians will be the last: they will have no successors and a tradition almost as old as Islam itself will be replaced by modern forms of administration. Adel Al Quraishi began this extraordinary project by taking portraits of the Guardians, after which he was allowed to photograph the keys and finally, to photograph through the enclosing iron grill into the chamber itself. This unprecedented access led to this remarkable photographic record.

Adel Al Quraishi is a self-taught visual artist born in the Saudi Arabian city of Al Khobar in 1968. Al Quraishi showed an interest in photography from an early age and set about capturing the world around him. Through the guidance of friend and mentor, Brazilian photographer Humberto da Silveira, Al Quraishi began to pursue his interest in becoming a photographer full-time in 1991, often employing analogue large-format cameras and Canon digital cameras. In addition to being a renowned landscape photographer, Al Quraishi's particular interest is photographing people and seeing beyond what is immediately gleaned from a first, cursory glance. He is now established as one of his country's leading photographers.

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