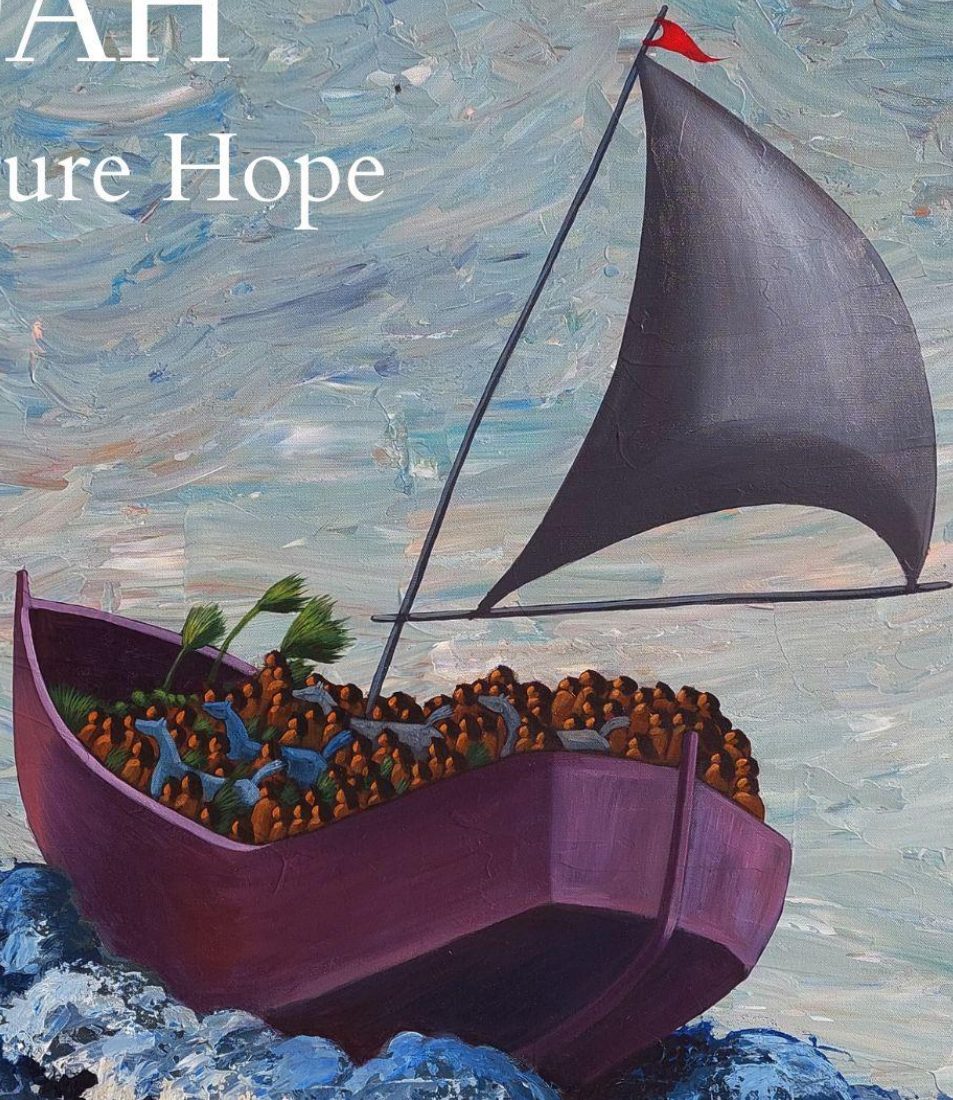


# NOAH

A Future Hope



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2025-2027

Organised and curated by

**CARAVAN**

[www.oncaravan.org](http://www.oncaravan.org)



# **NOAH – A Future Hope**

*An artistic exploration featuring three premier contemporary artists from the faith traditions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism on the importance of caretaking the earth inspired by the story of Noah, the ancient flood narrative found within the Abrahamic faiths*

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## Executive Summary

Noah has long been a figure embedded in the cultures of the Abrahamic faiths with the story of the ark, the animals and flood capturing the imagination of so many through toys, books and films. While Noah is a central character for children, the story of Noah takes on contemporary relevance as children grow up and face today's environmental and conservation challenges. Hence, while this quintessential story is held by the faith traditions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism, the story of Noah transcends religious boundaries, with lessons that continue to find relevance regarding environmental stewardship and our ethical responsibilities in a rapidly changing world.

The story of Noah is one of the most well-known flood stories in history. Flood stories have been around since humanity first started oral traditions, and are prevalent in indigenous cultures around the world. One thing we all seem to share as human beings through the ages is the wide prevalence of flood stories. The Sumerians were probably the first to write down their flood stories with the epic story of Gilgamesh in 2,600 BC. While there may be many reasons for the commonality of flood stories in cultures all around the world, they all remind us that we are subject to the forces of nature, that we depend on our environment for our existence, and that we must respect the earth, all living creatures and each other if there is to be balance, safety and prosperity.

The theme of the exhibition titled *NOAH: A Future Hope*, reflects the enormity of the environmental challenges that our world currently faces. Choosing today's most well-known epic flood story as the focus of this timely exhibition is a catalyst and platform for engaging discussion, inspiring action and effecting change. We are all aware of climate change and the effect our actions have on Creation. Each of us must take responsibility and become proactive agents in the preservation of life on earth and our environment.

There is irrefutable scientific evidence that sea levels are rising; we are literally sinking, albeit in a slower and less immediate way than happened in the story of Noah. However, the outcome will be the same. This is our warning and our cue to make the changes needed toward preventing further catastrophic flooding. It is a critical moment for the human family to acknowledge the immense damage that has been done to the earth's habitat, to all animal life and its fragile ecosystems. We have an opportunity to step up, take ownership and stop the destruction. While Noah is a cautionary story about the dangers of irresponsible human behavior, it also offers the possibility of change, hope and belief that a better, more responsible future is achievable.

The objective of *NOAH: A Future Hope* is to be a creative catalyst that inspires action toward enabling a brighter path to a promising future, offering a message of hope for future generations.

The story of Noah has been featured prominently in art throughout the centuries by a wide range of renowned artists, such as Michelangelo, Edward Hicks, Gustave Dore, Salvador Dali, Sir John Everett Millais, Marc Chagall and Anselm Kiefer. *NOAH: A Future Hope* will feature three celebrated contemporary artists from the faith traditions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism:

HADY BORAHEY (Muslim)

BRIAN WHELAN (Christian)

YONA VERWER (Jewish)

# An Overview

## Introduction

*NOAH: A Future Hope* is an artistic response to the escalating environmental and spiritual challenges that we currently face around the globe. It is a strategic and timely contemporary art exhibition that reminds us through the ancient epic story of Noah, which is shared by Muslims, Christians and Jews, that we must come together and be proactive to constructively address the global environmental issues that affect us all.

Noah/Noach/Nuh is a spiritual figure of distinct significance within the three primary monotheistic faith traditions, referred to as the Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity and Islam; all three originating in the Middle East. In all three faiths, the story of Noah serves as a reminder of humanity's role as a protector, steward and caretaker of Creation. The contemporary relevance of the Noah story lives in its capacity to inspire individuals and societies to become active participants in the stewardship of the earth. We are reminded that all are passengers on the same vessel in need of protection, care and the collective commitment to secure a sustainable future for generations to come. This epic story is also a message of hope for a harmonious coexistence between humans and the environment.

## Strategic Need

Today we increasingly face rapid change and uncertainty which serve to destabilize and provide a fertile basis for hatred and division. At times, this is completely overwhelming and it is important to confront, process and develop a framework of understanding in order to have a meaningful and sustainable strategy for the present and also for future generations.

The epic story of Noah and the flood is as relevant as ever. It is a vehicle that allows us to fully “own” where we are personally and as humanity in the history of the world; how we came to have reached this point, why we are “being flooded,” and how to move forward proactively with vision, concrete plans and hope to not only endure but ultimately, thrive.

We face a rapidly changing world full of natural disasters on an unprecedented scale. They range from those associated with climate change to the enormous environmental impact of industrialization and widespread consumerism. It is fair to say that we have reached a crisis, a tipping point, and it is imperative that people across the globe unite as never before to stop the downward spiral of destruction and proactively participate in ensuring a future for the earth and all its life forms.

*“The fact is that no species has ever had such wholesale control over everything on Earth, living or dead, as we now have. That lays upon us, whether we like it or not, an awesome responsibility. In our hands now lies not only our own future, but that of all other living creatures with whom we share the Earth.”*

*“If working apart we are a force powerful to destabilize our planet, surely working together we are powerful enough to save it...in my lifetime I’ve witnessed a terrible decline. In yours, you could and should witness a wonderful recovery.”*

*“The final chapter is ours to write. We know what we need to do. What happens next is up to us.”*

**-Sir David Attenborough**, broadcaster, biologist, naturalist and writer

## Goals

With this exhibition we aim to inspire and stimulate discussion around how we should live today towards preserving the earth both for ourselves and for future generations.

- To provide a catalyst/starting point that will bring communities together through shared concerns in spite of their different cultures, faiths, beliefs and ethnic backgrounds.
- To inspire people to work together towards a better future, addressing climate change and other threats to our planet, as we consider who we want to be tomorrow, and what actions are required at this time.
- To reignite a sense of wonder, harmony, peace and vision through experiencing the exhibition and its associated programming.

## The Exhibition

*NOAH: A Future Hope* features three celebrated contemporary visual artists from the faith traditions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism that were invited to each create 8 works that interpret in a contemporary way common themes from the story of Noah to serve as a guide and inspiration towards having a healthier relationship with everything upon our planet. Their artwork serves to inspire our imaginations about our need to be in a harmonious relationship with all of Creation: the earth and its wildlife, and each other. The exhibition will highlight how critical it is for the survival of our planet to honor our intricate connection to the earth as our sustainer, and how our world is calling for restoration, for a realignment of between ourselves and the earth, and with all of life upon it. *NOAH: A Future Hope* is an exhibition of creative expressions that nurtures more intentional and responsible living.

In this regard, we have much to learn from the epic story of Noah about maintaining a sacred balance with the earth and all that is upon it. *NOAH: A Future Hope* brings together three remarkable contemporary artists from the Abrahamic faith traditions whose artistic practice is a unique blend of their spiritual, cultural and creative expressions. Their two-dimensional paintings serve as a visual inspiration to reimagine the way we live in order to heal our world. This unique contemporary art exhibition seeks to encourage its viewing audiences to restore our world and foster harmony between all that is upon the earth.

## Seven Lessons Related to the Story of Noah

As the exhibition visually narrates the story of Noah as told in each of these three Abrahamic faith traditions, it focuses on lessons from the story that have profound implications for how we should live together as one family of caretakers of our planet and stewards of Creation. The exhibition, through the Noah narrative, encapsulates the urgency of addressing climate change, habitat loss and the degradation of natural resources, reminding its audiences that all our actions, or lack thereof, have profound consequences for the Earth and its inhabitants.

Each of the three artists have produced eight paintings (7 each 24x18 in / 61 x 46 cm, and 1 each of 48x36 in / 123 x 92 cm) focused on the below lessons from the story of Noah, interpreting them for today's contemporary context.

1- In the Noah flood story, humankind was ultimately responsible for the disaster. Humanity's responsibility is to care for the earth and all of its life.

2- Noah was warned of the coming disaster. Prevention is important and a focus on advocacy is needed as many do not believe there is a crisis.

3- We need to prepare for the looming crisis. Noah prepared for it by building the ark, reminding us that there is a need to focus on innovation and the development of solutions.

4- Noah took two of every creature and animal into the ark to preserve the species. We also need to care for all species, and highlight the intrinsic value of each - focusing on biodiversity, such as animal and wildlife. Noah's role as a guardian of the animals reflects humanity's obligation to protect and preserve the earth's ecosystems.

5- The Noah flood story reminds us of the need to care for the human family - saving all peoples in the human family, not just ourselves or our "tribe." One contemporary humanitarian crisis is referred to as "climate migration" – forced migration by land and sea due to severe climate change. It is essential that we each recognize our own role in prioritizing the well-being of all peoples. Caring for the environment is integral to the survival and prosperity of humanity.

6- Climate change is causing our world to be flooded, as oceans and seas are rising at unprecedented levels. Global warming is also bringing upon us other natural disasters. There are numerous ways in which we are being environmentally "flooded," such as overpopulation, trash and air pollution.

See: <https://time.com/longform/sinking-islands-climate-change/>

7- The Noah story draws our attention to the importance of plant life, and vegetation of all types. We are told that God "gave Noah green plants" and that Noah was "a man of the soil." The fresh olive branch in the dove's mouth upon its return to the ark, reminds us of how plant life was preserved during the flood. The olive branch highlights the critical role plant life plays in restoring a flooded world.

## The Artists

Three premier contemporary artists representing the faith traditions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism were commissioned to create original works that together bring the immediacy and importance of story of Noah to life for today.

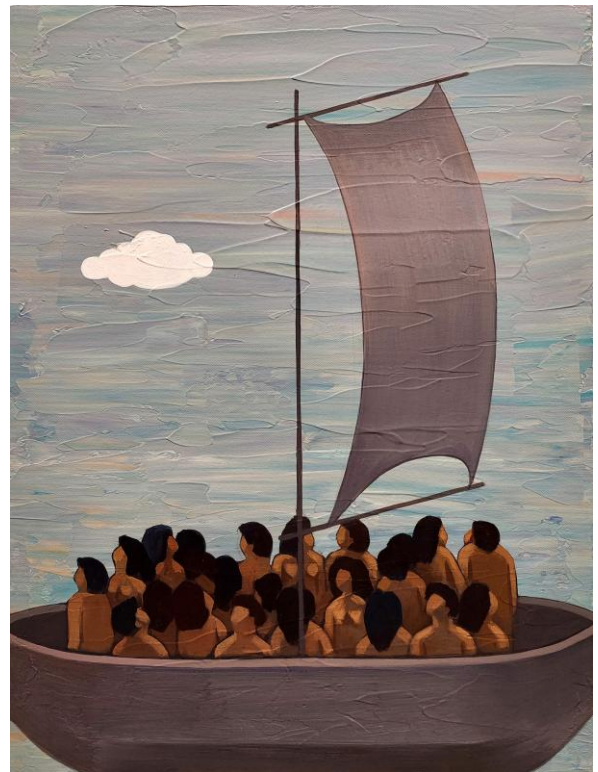


**HADY BORAELY** (Muslim)

**Hady Boraey** was born in Behira, Egypt. He holds a PhD and MA in Fine Arts from the Faculty of Fine Arts of University of Alexandria. As a lecturer in the Graphic Department at the University of Alexandria, he specializes in illustration, drawing, manual design, painting, traditional mixed media and installation. Boraey has participated in numerous exhibitions both in Egypt and internationally, such as in the United Arab Emirates, Canada, Italy, UK, and Poland.

Boraey has won various awards and his work is held in private collections around the world. Through a distinctive painting technique, metaphorically and symbolically, he takes the viewer on a poetic journey to discover the unknown and to open new horizons. Often his subjects are very primal and deeply connected to nature. He has participated in several CARAVAN exhibitions, including winning first place in the “To Heal the World” exhibition.

[hadyboraey.com](http://hadyboraey.com)



Two examples of Hady Boraey's work in *NOAH: A Future Hope*



**BRIAN WHELAN (Christian)**

Brian Whelan grew up in London, of Irish parents. After his training at the Royal Academy of Arts, he lived and worked in the East Anglia area of England near the North Sea. His home and studio are now based in Connecticut, USA.

Known to combine the profundity of play with the intent of icons, his paintings have been exhibited in noted art spaces, cathedrals and religious institutions around the world - such as Washington National Cathedral and Villanova University of Pennsylvania in the USA, St. Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London, St. Edmundsbury Cathedral and Norwich Cathedral in the UK, and Parador Dos Reis Catolicos, Santiago de Compostela in Spain. Whelan's work follows in the tradition of East Anglian medieval narrative painting.



[brianwhelanart.com](http://brianwhelanart.com)



Two examples of Brian Whelan's work in *NOAH: A Future Hope*



## YONA VERWER (Jewish)



Dutch-born New York multidisciplinary visual artist **Yona Verwer** creates works that explore identity, immigration, ecology, heritage, and spirituality. Sourcing from a variety of cultures, she works in a varied range of media and materials, among them painting, installations, new media and video.

Her current project in the making, *Living Waters*, navigates the connections between nature and human intervention, prompting contemplation on humanity's role in shaping the environment. It explores the delicate balance between nature and artifice, inviting viewers to ponder the intricate interdependence of the natural world.

Verwer holds a master's degree in fine art from the Royal Academy of Art in The Hague, and has shown in over 30 museum exhibitions, as well as many galleries, nationally and internationally. Her work has been recognized internationally through exhibitions at the Jerusalem Biennale, Andy Warhol Factory, Reginald Lewis Museum of African-American Art, Yeshiva University Museum, Ein Harod Museum, the Bronx Museum, Philadelphia Museum of Jewish Art, Mizel Museum, Stanback Museum, Canton Museum of Art, and the Holocaust Memorial Center. As the Director of the Jewish Art Salon in New York City, she is also known for her knowledge of Jewish art, and she administers a large Jewish artist network.

Similar to this exhibition on Noah, Verwer collaborated with artist Katarzyna Kozera on the series "The Book of Yona," which weaves together their stories as immigrants with the biblical story of Yona's namesake the prophet Jonah (Yona). Her use of the ocean and undersea imagery, issues of environmentalism, and most importantly redemption, deeply resonate in her work.

[yonaverwer.com](http://yonaverwer.com)



Two examples of Yona Verwer's work in *NOAH: A Future Hope*

## Exhibition Display

The exhibition consists of 24 paintings – 7 by each artist that are 24x18 inches / 61x46 cm (7 are in landscape format and 14 are in portrait format) and 1 by each artist that is 48x36 in / 123x92 cm. The installation of the paintings typically requires a minimum of 90 feet of linear space for a traditional gallery-type display, which includes in two informational boards.

The smaller 21 paintings can also be assembled together in the format of the ancient Eastern tradition of a “sacred screen,” mirroring the concept of an “iconostasis,” allowing for flexibility as to where the exhibition is positioned at a given venue. Displaying the artworks in this way would entail three rows of seven paintings, positioned above each other. CARAVAN can provide instructions for displaying the artwork in this way, if so desired.

## Exhibition Tour and Venues

*NOAH: A Future Hope* will launch during 2025, and tour for two and a half years within the Middle East, Europe and North America to art venues, cultural centers and heavily-trafficked sacred spaces.

## Associated Programs

The exhibition serves as a catalyst for each host venue to develop a variety of events and programs tailored to the specific needs of their communities to stimulate discussion, dialogue and education around the exhibition’s theme toward promoting further understanding. Each venue will use the exhibition to bring together those in their community from different religious and cultures backgrounds through a shared experience, inspiring them to create new connections and lasting friendships within their community.

CARAVAN will work closely with each host venue to help them develop the associated programming that they would like, sharing from our experience in developing strategic programming around our exhibitions to involve the whole community, widening the reach of the message of the exhibition. A wide range of elements will be offered to appeal to all age groups and to cover a full range of topics, concerns and activities.

These may include the following:

- Lectures
- Artist Talks
- Forums
- Panel Conversations
- Workshops
- Film Screenings
- Performance art
- Musical concerts
- Dance performances
- Literary readings
- Drama
- Education activities

## Beyond the Exhibition – Site-specific Artistic Installations

Depending on the resources, capacity, logistical capabilities and wishes of the venue, two different types of artistic installations could accompany the exhibition.

### Sculptural Installation

It would be possible for a local installation artist to create a 3D sculptural installation related to the story of Noah somewhere on the premises, that would draw attention from the general community. For example, an idea would be the artistic creation of an ark. Two illustrations are listed below (these are just examples).

[Scott Hocking](#), Artist (US)

*An ark sculpture from a reclaimed dilapidated barn.*

Titled “THE CELESTIAL SHIP OF THE NORTH (EMERGENCY ARK), AKA THE BARNBOAT,” is a site-specific installation and permanent sculpture in the farmlands of Michigan in the US. Based on ideas of ancient vessels and deluge stories, and shaped by the site's history and incredibly consistent winds, the Barnboat was built over the course of 3 months, and made entirely from the beams and boards of a collapsing 1890s barn that stood in its place. The project has been featured in [Sculpture Magazine](#), [Detroit News](#), [Detroit Art Review](#), [Detroit Free Press](#), and [Model D](#).



[Mark-Bradford](#), Artist

*“Mithra”*

Artist Mark Bradford created “Mithra” (2008), a 70-foot-long boat-like sculpture that evokes Noah’s wooden Ark in the story of the global flood. The installation is a call to action and a potent symbol of our shared responsibilities to protect those most vulnerable to the threats of climate change.



“Mithra” – named after the ancient Persian god of contracts, oaths, and mutual obligations – suggests the hasty and resource-poor construction of a ship built to escape a fast-approaching calamity like rising seawater. As the World Bank predicts that climate-driven migration may lead to the displacement of up to 216 million people over the next 30 years, “Mithra” is a clarion call to reduce and reverse our impact on the planet while addressing, by any means necessary and with whatever resources are available, the damage that has already been done.

*“The urgency to address climate-driven migration is an emergency that those with fewer resources and less infrastructure have felt for decades. One of the powers of art is to bring issues like this and put them right in front of us. You can look away, but you can’t say you didn’t know.”*

—Mark Bradford, artist



## A Light and Sound Installation

There is also the possibility for the establishment of a light and sound experience, that simulates flooding. The below Waterlicht installation *Studio Roosegaarde* is an example.

### [Waterlicht](#)

WATERLICHT Studio Roosegaarde is a dream landscape about the power and poetry of water. As a virtual flood, WATERLICHT shows how high the water level could reach. WATERLICHT is a collective experience to remind us of the importance of water innovation and the impact of climate change. [Waterlicht](#) has been exhibited in places like Amsterdam, New York, London and Toronto. It was the winner of IESNYC Lumen Award New York 2020, Global Future Design Award 2019, LIT 2017 Lighting Designer of the Year USA and The Best Lighting Environment Design China.

Studio Roosegaarde is on a mission, developing landscapes of the future and environmental topics address topics. They show people that by experiencing beauty, they can make a difference and that we should not accept a broken world.





## Artwork Publication (catalogue)

A four-color publication accompanies the exhibition that is designed as an educational resource for reflection, discussion and dialogue on the message of the exhibition. The publication includes information on the story of Noah in each of the three monotheistic faith traditions and on what the ancient narrative can teach us today in addressing climate change and environmental sustainability. All of the artwork is included in the publication, together with the artists' statements for each piece.

## Curator

**Paul G. Chandler** is an author, curator, interfaith peacemaker, intercultural bridgebuilder, non-profit executive, and authority on the Middle East, Africa and the Abrahamic spiritual traditions. He is the Founding President of CARAVAN Arts, an international arts non-profit/NGO that uses the arts for transformational purposes. He has organized and curated major art exhibitions internationally - in sacred spaces such as St. Paul's Cathedral in London and National Cathedral in Washington, D.C. and at notable art venues like the National Gallery of Fine Arts in Amman, Jordan, the American University Museum in Washington, D.C., Vanderbilt University Fine Arts Gallery, Sotheby's in London, Museum of Modern Art in Cairo, Egypt, as well as at reverential memorial sites like Ground Zero in New York. He is also an Anglican clergyman, as well as a sought-after guide on the all-embracing spirituality of the early 20th century Lebanese born poet-artist Kahlil Gibran, the author of *The Prophet*.



He grew up in Senegal, West Africa, and has worked extensively around the world in executive leadership roles within faith-based publishing, relief and development agencies, the arts and with the Anglican Communion. He is the author of four books, including his most recent book titled *IN SEARCH OF A PROPHET: A Spiritual Journey with Kahlil Gibran*, which focuses on the artistic spiritual journey of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century Arab-American poet-artist Kahlil Gibran.

## Organizer



CARAVAN, an international arts NGO/non-profit, is recognized as a global leader in using the arts to build bridges between diverse cultures, peoples and spiritual traditions, toward fostering a more harmonious future, both with each other and with the earth. CARAVAN's mission is based on the belief that the arts can be one of the most effective mediums to heal our world and to creatively foster peace and harmony, by enhancing understanding, bringing about respect, enabling sharing, and deepening relationships between those of different backgrounds and worldviews. CARAVAN's artistic initiatives have resulted in unprecedented partnerships with renowned and emerging artists from all over the globe, using art to transform our world. For more information, see: [oncaravan.org](http://oncaravan.org).



## Partners

*NOAH: A Future Hope* is an opportunity to partner programmatically with NGOs and corporations focused on the environmental sustainability and climate change, including cultural and faith-based/interreligious non-profits, as well as art and cultural venues and sacred spaces,

## Sponsors

The opportunity to financially support *NOAH: A Future Hope* is extended to a wide range of sponsors, including public and private corporations, as well as foundations and philanthropists.

## Contact

For all queries and more information, email: [exhibitions@oncaravan.org](mailto:exhibitions@oncaravan.org)

For further reading:

[Rising Seas Will Erase More Cities by 2050](#)