

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: October 16, 2017

Contacts: Dr. Akram Khater, Khayrallah Center, Director, akhater@ncsu.edu, 919-515-5042

Digitizing the Ameen Rihani Museum Archive

Raleigh, NC (USA) & Beirut, Lebanon – October 16, 2017 – The Moise A. Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies is pleased to announce a partnership with the **Ameen Rihani Foundation** in Washington D.C. and the **Ameen Rihani Museum** in Freikeh, Lebanon to digitize the various papers, manuscripts, and published articles of Ameen Rihani. Ameen Rihani (1876-1940) was a luminary of twentieth-century literature, philosophy, and political thought. Rihani wrote in both English and Arabic and was influential in both: his 1911 English-language novel, *The Book of Khalid*, is one of the first Arab-American novels, and he is credited with the introduction of free verse to Arabic poetry. Additionally, Rihani was a frequent contributor to Arabic and English newspapers, lectured widely across the US and the world, and was a political activist who advocated for Pan-Arabism, and rapprochement between the US and the Arab World.

The collaboration between the Khayrallah Center and the Rihani Museum is a landmark digitization project. It is the first time that the whole corpus of a major Arab intellectual figure will be preserved and made accessible online. The digitization of the Rihani Museum archive will preserve and protect the invaluable and fragile original documents, manuscripts and photos. In doing so, it will ensure that Rihani's work and legacy will be preserved for generations to come. Moreover, this collaborative project will transcend geographical limitations and make Rihani's rich works accessible to scholars across the globe.

The director of the Khayrallah Center, Dr. Akram Khater, noted that: "It is a privilege to collaborate on this groundbreaking project with the Ameen Rihani Museum and the Ameen Rihani Foundation. These are premier cultural and intellectual organizations that have safeguarded and promoted the works of Rihani and that have helped shaped modern Arab literature and thought. Together we will be able to advance our mutual mission of preserving the history of the Lebanese diaspora, and of sharing its stories and cultural productions with the world."

QUOTE FROM Dr. Rihani

We expect this work to begin in Spring 2018 with preliminary phase of digitization completed within 6 months.

About the Khayrallah Center

The Moise A. Khayrallah Center for Lebanese Diaspora Studies is dedicated to research about Lebanese immigrants in the U.S. and throughout the world, and to preserving and sharing that knowledge with the scholarly community and general public. The center examines historical and contemporary Lebanese immigration in all of its dimensions—social, political, economic, and cultural—through a number of endeavors including: a physical and digital archive, digital humanities projects, museum exhibits, a biennial conference, and publications, including the academic journal, *Mashriq & Mahjar*.

About the Rihani Museum

The Rihani Museum was founded in 1953 by Albert Rihani to preserve the legacy of his brother, Ameen Rihani. It represents a national treasure and a world heritage site. In addition to its significant archival collection, the Rihani Museum holds many of Rihani's objects, including works of art, personal belongings, and gifts that he received from world leaders and prominent friends. Now run by Dr. Ameen Albert Rihani--Ameen Rihani's nephew and himself a distinguished intellectual and author--the Rihani Museum fosters scholarship and translation of Ameen Rihani's works.