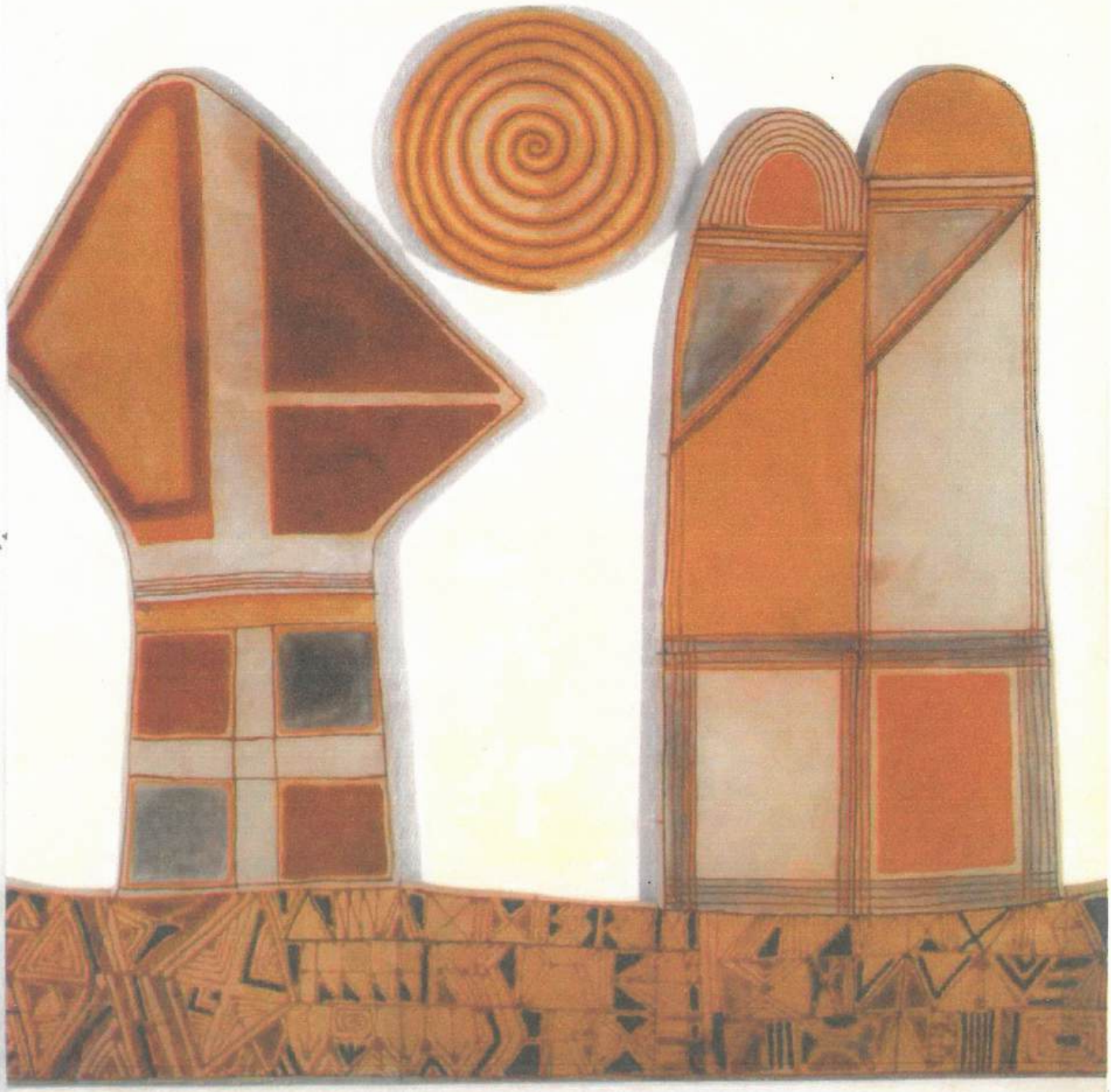
arts

& THE ISLAMIC WORLD

No's 27+28

UK £20 Overseas US$ 40





MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY ...

Over fifty years ago with the commissioning of its very first plant to manufacture soda ash, ICI started a relationship with a country and its people. From humble beginnings of making available "Soda" for the washing of clothes, ICI Pakistan today meets more than 80% of the national demand for soda ash, essential for the manufacture of glass, detergents, paper, "desi" laundry soaps and chemicals.

MUCH MORE THAN SODA ASH ...

But ICI Pakistan is much more than the Business of **Soda Ash**. We also manufacture **Polyester Fibres** for the easy-care clothes you wear. Add colour, protection and beauty around you with the finest Paints money can buy. We sell locally manufactured **Specialty Chemicals** and source and supply from around the world a range of **Chemicals** for use as raw materials in industrial production. Provide a broad range of locally produced and imported **Pharmaceuticals** including cardiovascular and life-saving drugs and Animal Health formulations. High quality **Agrochemicals & Seeds** are marketed by us to farmers nationally to protect crops and improve yields. And we sell **Consumer Products** that bring comfort and convenience and so improve the quality of life.

CARE AND CONCERN ...

Care and concern for people is essential to the culture of ICI Pakistan. It means providing a challenging, safe and healthy work environment for our employees. Manufacturing and providing quality products for our customers. Safeguarding the environment and assisting in the development of the communities we work and live within.

FOR FIFTY YEARS WE HAVE BEEN A PART OF YOUR LIFE!

FIFTY AND GOING STRONG ...

At a robust fifty, we have a sense of history and achievement, but are still young enough to be vigorous and innovative in our search for a better tomorrow. We look forward to the future with the promise to bring you a wider choice of products through new processes and advanced technologies to become an even more important part of your life.



Towards a Better Tomorrow

ICI

ICI Pakistan Limited

• Soda Ash • Polyester Fibres • Paints • Agrochemicals & Seeds • Chemicals • Pharmaceuticals & Animal Health • Consumer Products

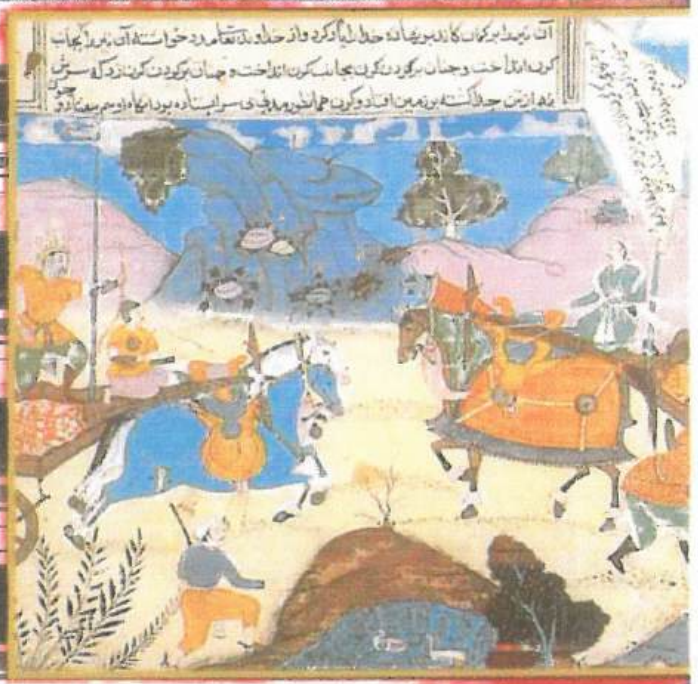
The Dicti

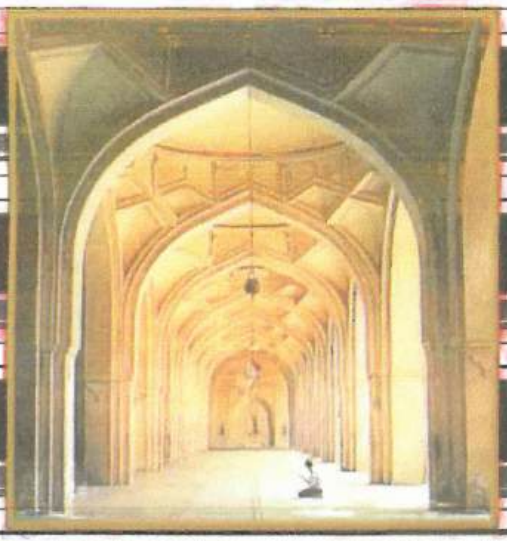
ART

"...one must soberly salute this publication as the greatest single accomplishment in the field of Islamic art-historical-scholarship-in-the-whole-history-of-the subject. It marks the moment when this branch of art history has come of age."

Dr. Robert Hillenbrand







The Dictionary contains the most complete survey of the arts created by and for Muslims over fourteen centuries from the Atlantic Ocean to the Philippines. The knowledge and opinions of the best scholars in the world have been made accessible from every possible point of view – historical, geographical, technical, theoretical (and) thematic."

Professor Oleg Grabar

Contents

16 Editorial

FEATURES

17 Ottoman Art from the Khalili Collection TIM STANLEY

21 Treasures from Kuwait at Fitzwilliam PATRICIA JELLICOE

25 Pages of Perfection: Islamic Manuscripts from St Petersburg MARIA REZVAN

29 The Kanoo Collection in Bahrain SAMAR AL GAILANI

33 **Africa 95:** Three Artists at the Tate Liverpool JUDITH NESBITT

37 Modern Islamic Artists and International Contemporary Art WIJDAN ALI

41 Portrait of the Artist as a Yearning Man SAJID RIZVI

49 Recent Exhibitions at Leighton House JULIA FINDLATER

53 Within the Middle East: Textile, Dress and Ornament JENNIFER SCARCE

57 Music Village: Focus on Pakistan PRAKASH DASWANI

61 Museums in Morocco CAROL H MALT

64 Coverage of Islamic Art in Reference Works JONATHAN BLOOM

65 The 1995 Aga Khan Award for Architecture AZIM NANJI

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT 24pp
Traditional Architecture of Dubai
MALIK A OMER

REPORTS & REVIEWS

81 INDONESIA

1995: The Cultural Scene

Indonesia's Istiqlal Festival FERDY SALIM

Pirous Gallery: A Landmark in Bandung MAMANNOOR

NAM Contemporary Art Exhibition & Seminar DJOKO SOEJONO

Minangkabau in London SYLVIA ARIFIN

Impressions of Jakarta 95 WIJDAN ALI

93 RUSSIA

Moscow Conference on Islam & the Dialogue of Cultures SAID KIAMILEV

Session on "Art and Islam" TATIANA STARODOUB & MAIS NAZARU

97 UAE

Dubai's Museum for the People STEVE SIMON

UAE Newsletter MALIK A OMER

103 SAUDI ARABIA

Alwan Al Haroof: The Colour of Words HELEN AL AMMARI

New Art Gallery at Al Khobar

107 EGYPT

Contemporary Egyptian Art Surveyed ELIZABETH RODENBECK

109 OMAN

Oman Heritage Exhibition at UNESCO MUSA BIN JAAFAR BIN HASSAN

111 MALAYSIA

Kuala Lumpur Newsletter SHARIFAH ZURIAH ALJEFFRI

115 PAKISTAN

Tampered Surface ALNOOR MITHA

Tanvir Shams: Arabian Landscapes

Ahmed Moustafa's Visit to Pakistan M ATHAR TAHIR

120 UNITED KINGDOM

Al Furqan Heritage Foundation: Conference and Exhibition A HAMILTON

An Opera Set in the Heavens HAFIZ KARMALI

Launching of Asia House CAMILLA EDWARDS

Touring Egypt in 1834: An Artist's Album Discovered SARAH SEARIGHT

Egee Editions MARY RICHARDSON

Art in Action Festival at Waterperry STEPHEN PENDERGAST

An Academic Tribute to Rasheed Araeen BARBARA BURMAN

The Islamic Art Circle, London RACHEL WARD

The Dianoor Mughal Collection KARI STAUBO

Visual Islamic and Traditional Arts Degree Show SHAHZAD SHEIKH

Connoisseur Gallery Relocated SALAMA KHAJA

The 1995 Islamic Art Week in London PATRICIA JELLICOE

Cover: **Farid Belkahia**, Procession 5 1994-5. Skin, wood & pigment. 1640 × 2550mm. Photo Richard Goulding.

arts

& THE ISLAMIC WORLD
Double Issue (Nos 27 + 28)
ISSN 0264 1828

CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF EDITORS
Muazzam Ali

EXECUTIVE EDITOR
Jalal Uddin Ahmed

DIRECTOR MARKETING
Ashraf Kazi

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
BANGLADESH Dr S M Hasan
CANADA Dr Gulzar Haider
EGYPT Abdallah Schleifer
FRANCE Dr Said Zulficar
GERMANY Dr Annemarie Schimmel
HUNGARY Dr Geza Fehervari
INDIA Dr Mulk Raj Anand
INDONESIA H Ferdy Selim
JORDAN Dr Wijdan Ali
MALAYSIA Raja Fuzah B Raja Tun Uda
MOROCCO Dr Jean-Louis Michon
PAKISTAN K Shahid Hosain
TURKEY Dr Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu
UK Alistair Duncan / Saleem Shahid

MANAGING EDITOR
Azra J Ahmed

RESEARCH ASSOCIATE
Camilla Edwards

DEVELOPMENT ADVISOR
M Risaluddin

ART DIRECTOR
Zafar Abbas Malik

DESIGN AND PRODUCTION
Umran Design

DEVELOPMENT EXECUTIVE
Anita Visram

REGIONAL REPRESENTATIVES
SOUTH ASIA
Iqbal Rashid Siddiqui
SOUTH EAST ASIA
Shanfah Zuriah Aljeffri
North America
Carol Hotchkiss Malt
Middle East
Elizabeth Rodenbeck
United Arab Emirates
Malik A Omer

PRINT
BCP, Basildon, UK

February 1996
ISSN 0264 1828

Published by the
Islamic Arts Foundation,
London
144-146 King's Cross Road
London WC1X 9DH
Tel +44 171 833 8275
Fax +44 171 278 4797

Distributors:

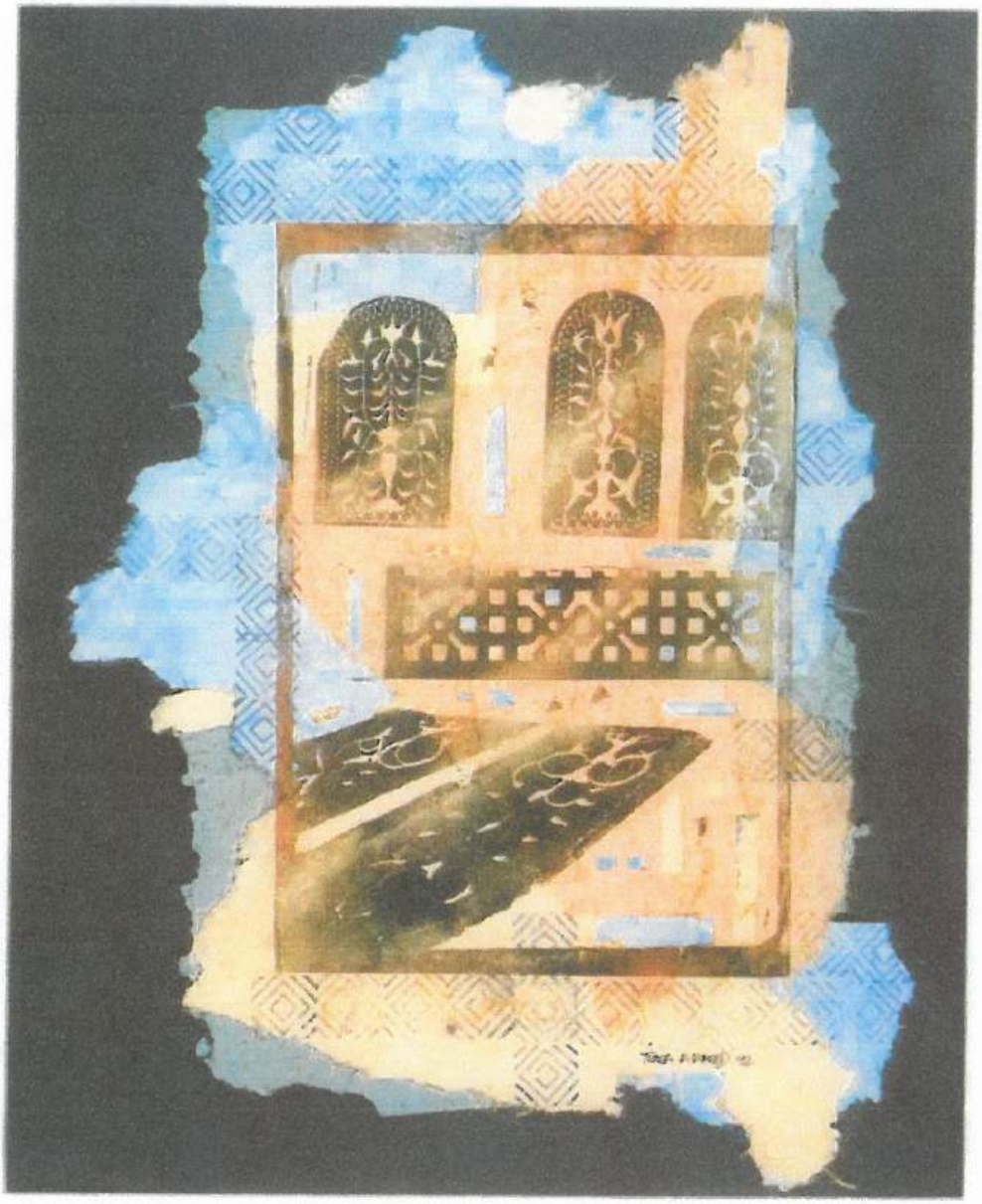
UK
Central Books
99 Wallis Road
London E9 5LN
Tel 0181 986 4854
Fax 0181 533 5821

USA
Fine Print Distributors
500 Pampa Drive
Austin, Texas 78752
Tel 512 452 8709
Fax 512 452 8716

CANADA
Speedimpex Canada Inc
155 Deerhide Crescent
Unit 1, Weston
Ontario M9M 2Z2
Tel 416 741 7555
Fax 416 741 4634

All written and printed material in this magazine may only be reproduced with the written permission of the editors. Opinions expressed in articles in this magazine are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the publisher. No responsibility can be accepted for unsolicited material.

SINGLE COPY: **£10** / DOUBLE ISSUE: **£20**
SUBSCRIPTION FOR 4 ISSUES:
UK £30 / Overseas **US $60**
All rates include surface postage
Air surcharge for 4 issues (US $15)



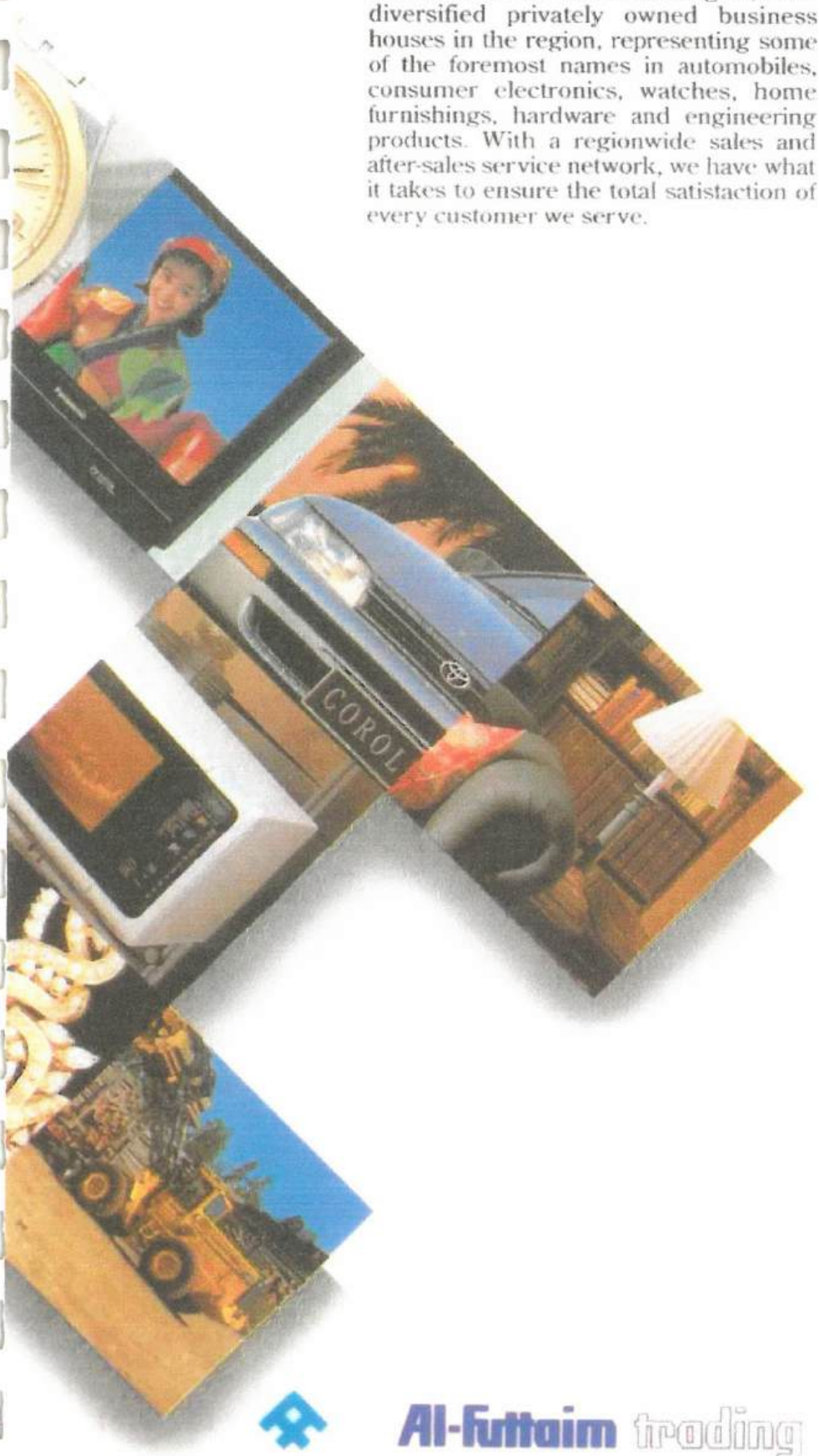
Windows. Collograph with hand-made paper by Tina Ahmed

ORCHID GENERAL TRADING

Largest supplier in the Gulf for paper: offset, coated, art, self-adhesive, carbonless, cover, photocopy, newsprint, manifold or bank; and board; Bristol, Duplex, Food, Solid bleached and much more.

P O Box 60361 • Dubai • UAE • Telephone 9714 852240 (3 lines) • Fax 9714 852970

In the Arabian world, Al-Futtaim means business. We are one of the largest, most diversified privately owned business houses in the region, representing some of the foremost names in automobiles, consumer electronics, watches, home furnishings, hardware and engineering products. With a regionwide sales and after-sales service network, we have what it takes to ensure the total satisfaction of every customer we serve.



TOYOTA
LEXUS
HONDA
VOLVO
CHRYSLER
Jeep
Hino
National
Panasonic
Technics
SANYO
TOSHIBA
AFTRON
SEIKO
RW
RAYMOND WEIL
GENEVE
Kolber
GENEVE
WESTAR
IKEA
ACE Hardware

Al-Futtaim trading

Committed to progress in the UAE.

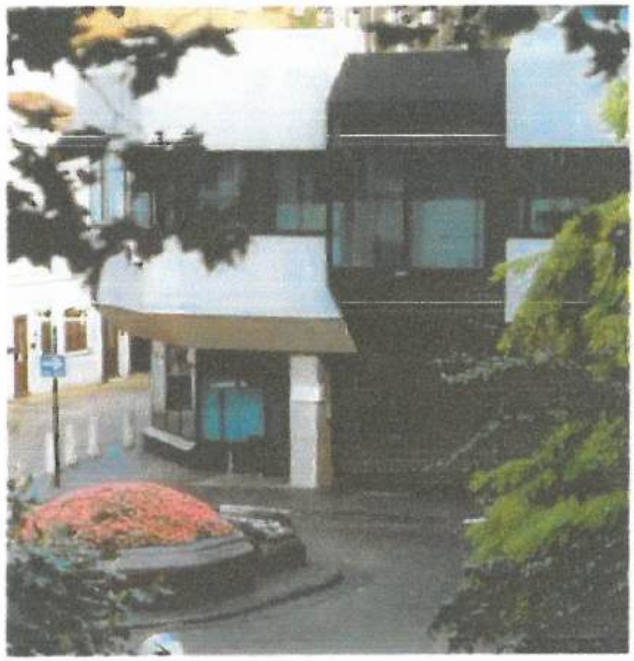
P.O. Box 152, Dubai, United Arab Emirates.

CROMWELL

HOSPITAL

Britain's Best

The greatest range of technology of any private hospital in the United Kingdom



- Cancer treatment including radiotherapy
- Kidney unit and dialysis service
- Liver unit with surgery & transplantation
- Heart surgery & cardiology
- Neuro-surgery & neurology
- General medicine & surgery
- Health screening for men and women
- Infertility treatment with IVF
- Physiotherapy
- and many other specialities

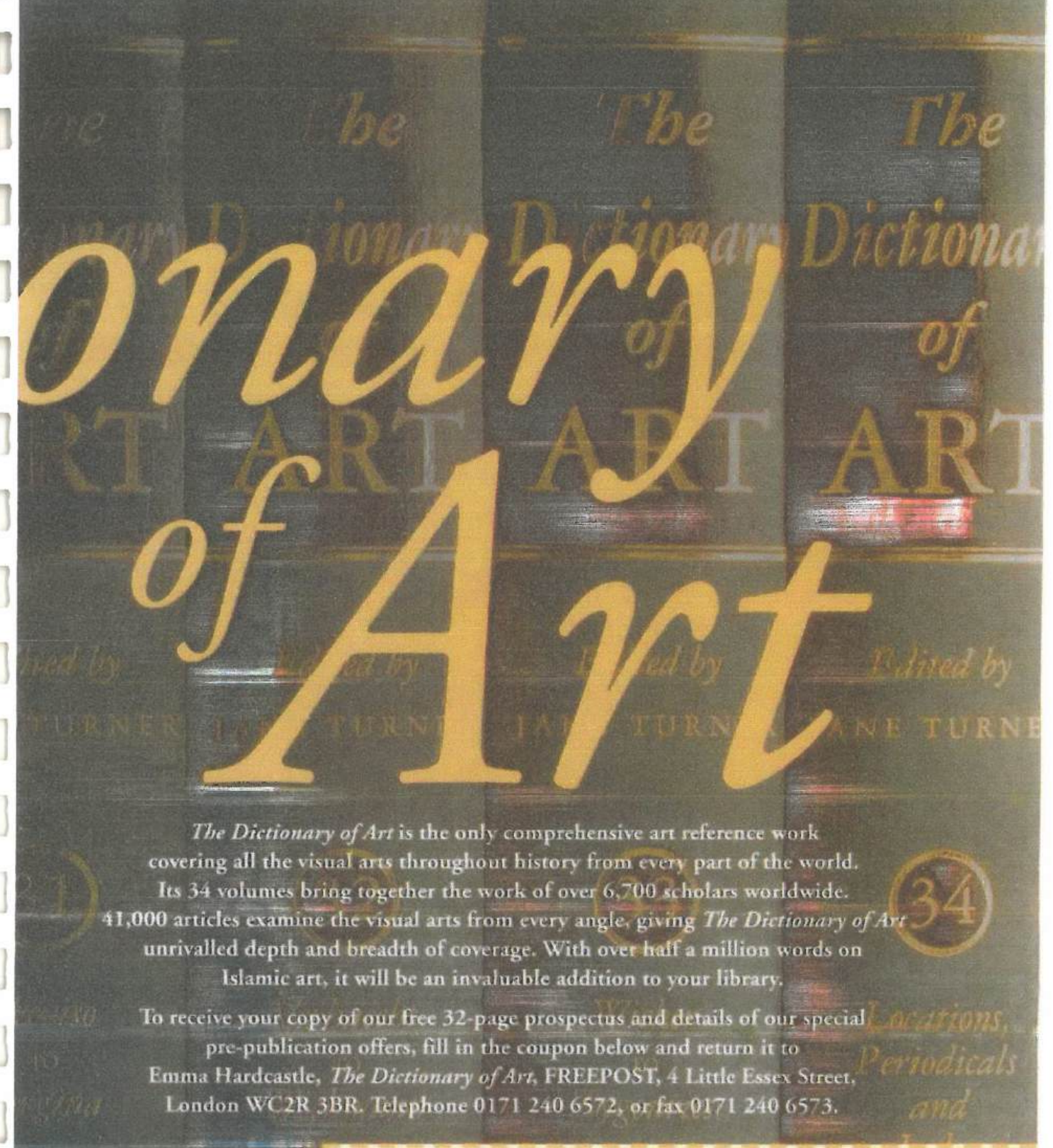
Cromwell Hospital has an international reputation for medical excellence. It is renowned for its patient care, high standard of medical specialists, and comprehensive range of services together with its caring staff and comfortable surroundings.

The best in patient care

For further information please contact:

Cromwell Hospital, Cromwell Road, London SW5 0TU

Telephone: (+44) 71 370 4233 ext 5041/5043 Fax: (+44) 71 431 4867



The Dictionary of Art is the only comprehensive art reference work covering all the visual arts throughout history from every part of the world. Its 34 volumes bring together the work of over 6,700 scholars worldwide. 41,000 articles examine the visual arts from every angle, giving *The Dictionary of Art* unrivalled depth and breadth of coverage. With over half a million words on Islamic art, it will be an invaluable addition to your library.

To receive your copy of our free 32-page prospectus and details of our special pre-publication offers, fill in the coupon below and return it to Emma Hardcastle, *The Dictionary of Art*, FREEPOST, 4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3BR. Telephone 0171 240 6572, or fax 0171 240 6573.

The Dictionary of Art

MACMILLAN

The Dictionary of Art

YES **I would like to find out more about *The Dictionary of Art*. Please send me my FREE 32-page prospectus.**

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Country _____ Telephone _____

Please return to: Emma Hardcastle, *The Dictionary of Art*, FREEPOST, 4 Little Essex Street, London WC2R 3BR, UK.

AIW 9/98

DUBAI
DUTY FREE

drives the WORLD



Mercedes Benz S 500I. Brilliant Silver *BMW 850 Ci Red Fjord Grey*

Dubai Duty Free's Finest Surprise.

Dubai Duty Free, pioneers of the finest surprise car promotion, now in its sixth year, offer you a choice. Tickets may be purchased for one or two luxury cars - at Departures and Arrivals. For each car, tickets are priced at Dhs 500/US$ 139 and limited to 1000 bonafide travellers either departing from, transiting through, or arriving at Dubai International Airport. The draw date and winning numbers will be published, and each participant will be advised. The cars will be shipped to the winners' address free of charge.

The finest collection at the world's most elegant duty free. Fly Buy Dubai

CITIBANK VISA

THE ONLY CARD YOU WILL EVER NEED



BECAUSE...



IT'S A CREDIT CARD

You can pay a minimum amount of your outstanding balance each month, and revolve the rest. The flexibility and convenience of a revolving credit facility.



IT'S A CHARGE CARD

You may also use this as a charge card... pay in full each month and incur no service fees or financial charge.



IT'S A CASH CARD

You can withdraw cash from all Citibank branches in Pakistan, from 209,000 ATMs and over 300,000 banks and financial institutions worldwide.



AND IT IS A GLOBAL CARD

With thousands of outlets in Pakistan and at over 12 million establishments worldwide, Citibank Visa is the most widely accepted card in the world.

GOOD NEWS!!!

All you need to do to apply for a Citibank Visa card is complete an application form and attach a copy of your National I D card, and send it to us.

NO OTHER DOCUMENTS ARE REQUIRED!!

APPLY TODAY!

✂ Please fill the coupon and mail to:

Credit Cards Marketing, Citibank N. A., Bahria Complex, 4th Floor, 24 M. Tamiruddin Khan Road, Karachi.

Please send me more information on the Citibank Visa Card

Name _____

Address _____

_____

Tel (Off) _____ Tel (Res) _____

Call Citibank:

- Karachi : 243-5000
- Lahore : 631-5000
- Rawalpindi : 56– 5000
- Faisalabad : 63–6041



THE BEST WAY TO PAY

HAPPY HOURS

TAKE TIME. ENJOY MOMENTS OF MAGIC



ACCURATE®

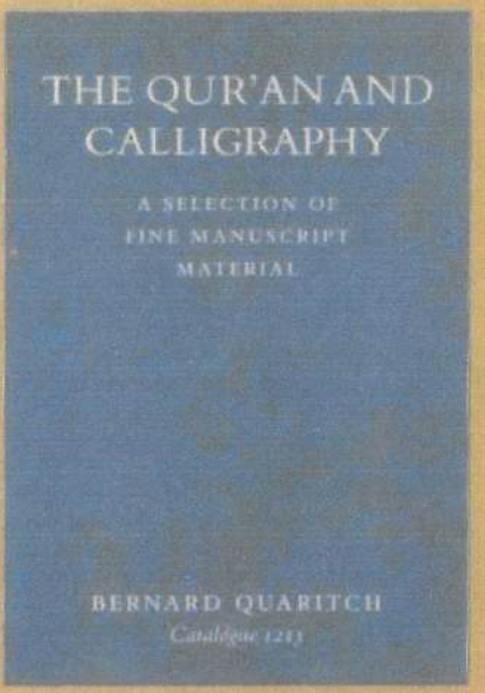
SWISS

- Sapphire Crystal Glass
- Various Dial Colours Available
- One Year International Warranty

ACCUTIME LTD

MANUFACTURER OF FINE ACCURATE WATCHES
RUE DE LA GARE 26 2501 BIENNE CASE POSTALE 920
SWITZERLAND
TEL 032 23 88 51 FAX 032 23 40 51

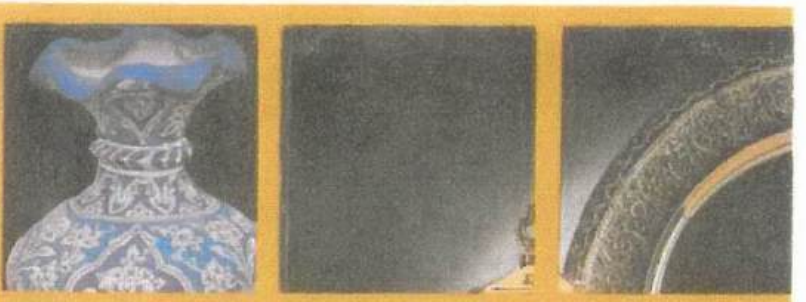
Antiquarian Booksellers since 1847



BERNARD QUARITCH LTD

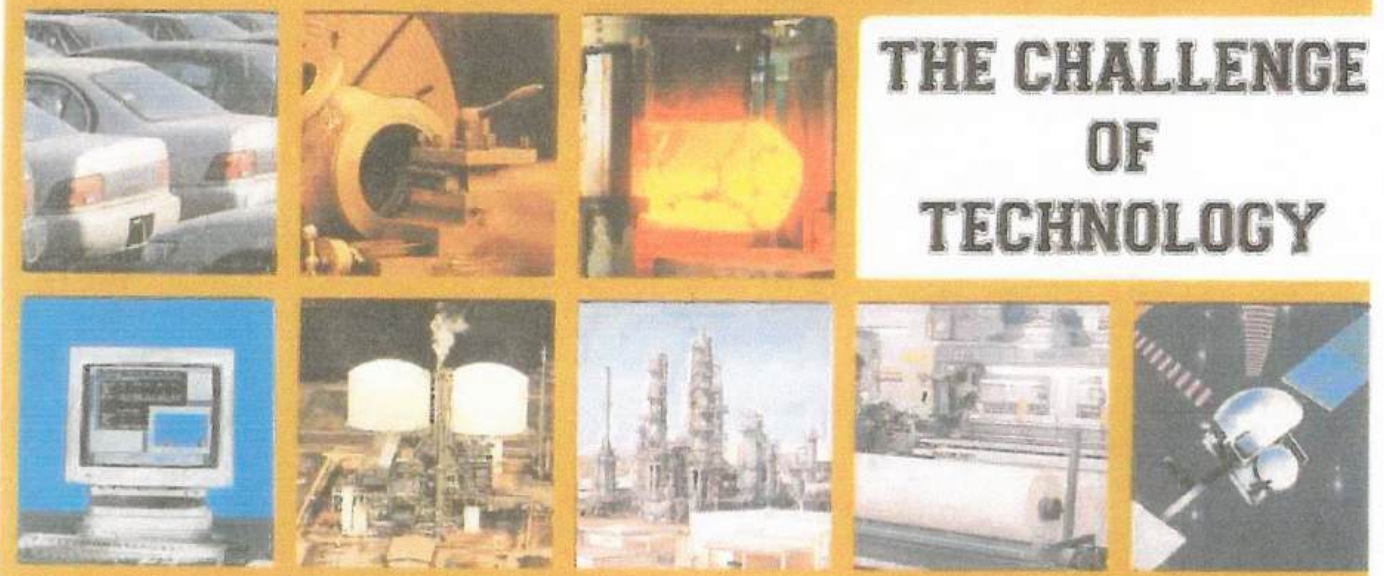
5-8 LOWER JOHN STREET · GOLDEN SQUARE · LONDON W1R 4AU
TEL +44 171- 734 2983 · FAX +44 171- 437 0967

THE GRANDEUR OF HERITAGE





THE CHALLENGE OF TECHNOLOGY



BOUNTIES OF THE GOOD EARTH



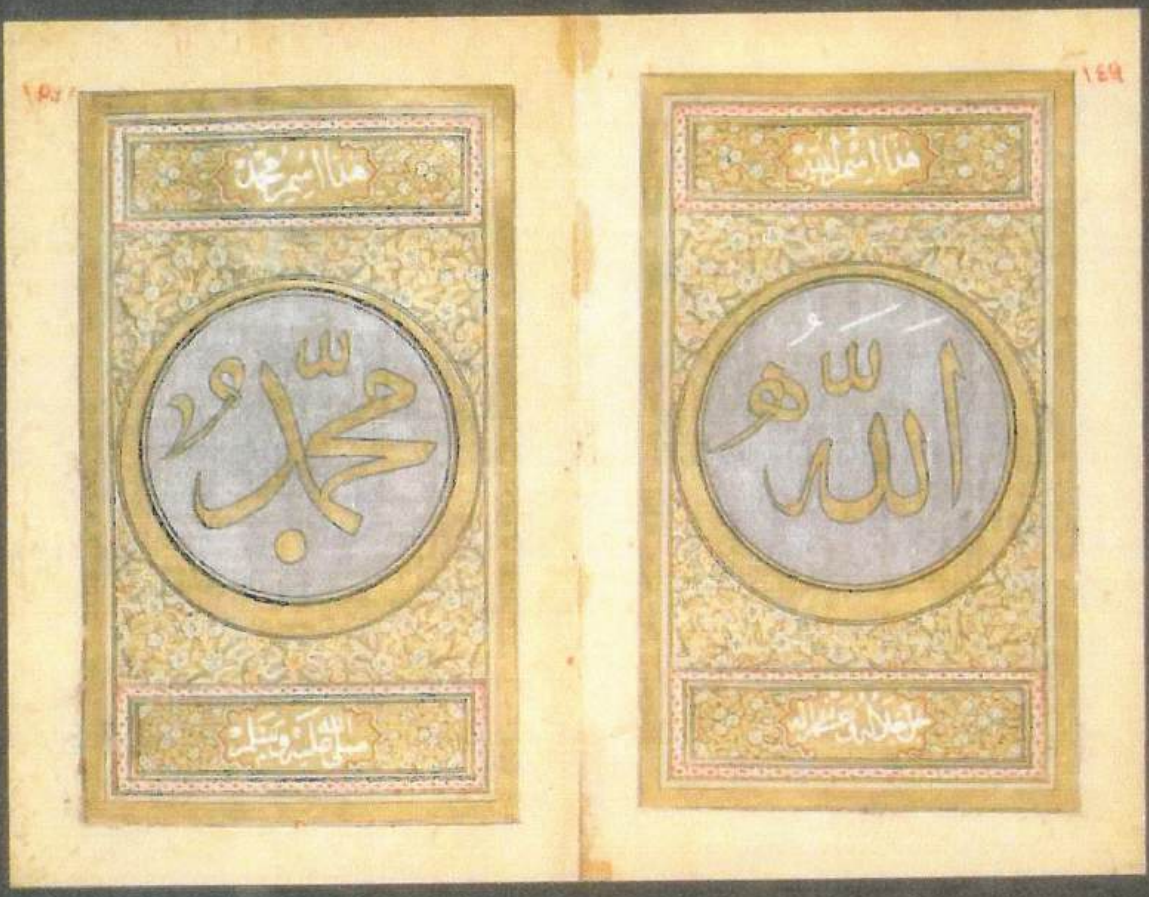
PRODUCTS PAKISTAN – *inviting the world to share their excellence!*

EPB Export Promotion Bureau

Government of Pakistan

Block "A", 5th Floor Finance & Trade Centre Sharae Faisal, Karachi

Tel: 512260-527116 Fax: (92-21) 516205-5684010 Tlx: 23877 EXPOM PK



Two pages from an Arabic manuscript written in Naskh script. Ottoman 18th century

With the compliments of
Makram Z Irani

The Connoisseur Gallery

ESTABLISHED SINCE 1966

14 Holland Street, Kensington, London W8 4LT
Tel 0171 937 0788 Fax 0171 937 0688

30 Years in Orientalist and Islamic art

Member A B A & I A B

WORKS *of* ART





YOU *can* WEAR

Movado watches are admired the world over for their timeless, classic design. So much so that you can find a Movado in the permanent collections of over 22 Museums throughout the world. Why wear a watch when you can wear a masterpiece?

Silver Inlaid Brass Candlestick Holder, manufactured in Syria in the 14th Century A.D.

Dr. Abdul Latif Tassim Kanoo's Islamic collection, Bahrain

The Movado Horizon Watch. Gold plated case. Water resistant to 30 metres. Quartz movement. Available for gents and ladies.

موفـــادو
MOVADO
The Museum Watch

• **UAE**. *Ahmed Seddiqi & Sons*, Dubai, Tel: 237969/531772. *Al Masaood Jewellery*, Abu Dhabi, Tel: 337800. Al Ain, Tel: 656875 • **Saudi Arabia**. *Kooheji Store*, Al Khobar, Tel: 8641113, Dammam, Tel: 8330909, Al Hofuf, Tel: 5866460. *Al Hamadhi Watches & Jewellery Co.*, Riyadh, Tel: 4116555, Jeddah, Tel: 6434633, Mecca, Tel: 5746221, Medina, Tel: 8230501 • **Kuwait**. *Murad Yousif Behbehani*, Safat, Tel: 4844000 • **Qatar**. *Al Muftah Jewellery*, Doha, Tel: 441320/441313 • **Lebanon**. *Est. Georges Abou Adal & Cie*, Beirut, Tel: 200360/334215

EGEE ART CONSULTANCY

Horses and Riders of the Middle East

from Egee Art Gallery



Edwin Lord Weeks (1849-1903)
Oil on Canvas - 1895
Study for "A Royal Procession Before The Juma Masjid"

Weeks was one of several American artists who painted in nineteenth century Paris. He was a student of Jerome and Bonnat at the Ecole des Beaux Arts at Paris. He exhibited at major salon exhibitions, winning medals and being made a Chevalier de la Légion d'Honneur in 1896. His work hangs in the Metropolitan Museum in New York and the Louvre, among others.

9 CHELSEA MANOR STUDIOS FLOOD STREET LONDON SW3 5SR ENGLAND Tel 0171 351 6818 Fax 0171 376 3510

MOVADO

Classic Perfection



Movado Museum Watch

Movado, the Swiss Watch Company, can trace their roots back to the early 19th century. Over the years, their timepieces have attracted the attention of discerning patrons, but surely their best known creation must be the elegant and simple design of the Museum Watch.

When recently re-launching their unique range of classically designed watches in the Middle East, Movado and their agents Gult Advertising decided to seek a theme for the promotion of the watches that would fit in with their own philosophy of perfection and simplicity in design. The result was a collaboration between Movado and Dr. Abdul Latif Kanoo, the founder of Bahrain's Beit Al Qur'an in which pieces from his private collection of Islamic Art would be used to complement Movado's watches. The pieces from the collection, painstakingly gathered from such diverse areas of the Islamic world as Andalusia and China, are some of the finest examples of their kind in glass, precious metals, brass, ivory, ceramics, wood and fabric in the world.



Movado, who have a long connection with the world of art, immediately appreciated how a collection providing such a fascinating insight into the rich heritage of the Islamic people of the world could complement their equally rich heritage of innovation in design stretching back to the creation in1912 of the first watch shaped to fit the wrist. Movado went on to introduce the first chronometer in 1925 and the waterproof watch ten years later. By 1960, Movado's new watch with its plain black face with only a golden dot at 12 o'clock designed by American designer Nathan George Horwitt was on display in the Design Collection at the New York Museum of Modern Art and in 22 other museums around the world.

Today, Movado continue their connection with the world of art by inviting world famous artists to design watches for production in limited edition. Just before he died, the renowned pop artist Andy Warhol created his famous "Andy Warhol Times/5" design for Movado.

Since then, such eminent artists as Yaacov Agam, James A. Rosenquist, Max Bill and the sculptor Arman have created unique timepiece designs that have earned Movado a reputation as leaders in the field.



Movado Minuet - Ladies Watch

Movado are proud to have their unique watches associated with the timeless beauty that is Islamic Art.

موفادو
MOVADO®
The Museum Watch.

EDITORIAL

This double-issue of *Arts & the Islamic World* combines Nos. 27 and 28, and provides an overview of the Islamic arts scene in 1995. Among the year's major international exhibitions of Islamic art were the Ottoman art from the Nasser D Khalili Collection, at the Musee Rath in Geneva; the treasures from the Al-Sabah Collection, at the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge; and a selection of Islamic manuscripts from St Petersburg, at the Villa Favorita in Lugano and the Metropolitan Museum in New York. All of these are reviewed in the pages that follow. We are also happy to introduce a valuable personal collection so far known only within the small circle of Islamic art collectors and cognoscenti, and now for the first time unveiled in a volume of splendid reproductions published in Bahrain: Dr Abdul Latif Jassim Kanoo's Collection of Islamic Art. Objects from the Collection have been exhibited from time to time in some of the Gulf countries, including Bahrain itself and in Kuwait; and one hopes these will be seen in a comprehensive presentation in other countries also.

.....

1995 marked 50 years of Indonesia's independence, as well as the 40th anniversary of the historic Asia-Africa Conference held in Bandung in 1955. To celebrate these, a number of art and cultural events were organised throughout the country, and a report, guest-edited by our Contributing Editor in Indonesia, H Ferdy Salim, appears in this issue. 1995 was also the year of the Aga Khan Awards for Architecture's 6th cycle, here reviewed by a distinguished academic who was himself a member of the Master Jury of the Awards presented in 1992 in Samarkand, Dr Azim Nanji. And from Moscow, the Director of the Institute of Islamic Civilisation, Dr Said Kiamilev, reports on an International Conference on Islam, organised under Unesco's current project *Dialogue of Cultures*, with a working session devoted to "Art and Islam".

.....

With this issue of *Arts & The Islamic World* we present to our readers a separate Special Supplement on the "Traditional Architecture of Dubai", guest-edited by our Regional Representative in the United Arab Emirates, Malik A Omer. It has been prepared with the cooperation and assistance of the Dubai Municipality, and is introduced here by its visionary Director General, Qassim Sultan, as "the first step in the conservation of the heritage of the Emirate of Dubai."

.....

Plans have been announced for the 5th in the series of *triennial* international seminars on Islamic arts, which could not be held in 1994. The dates are 19-24 April 1996, on the same theme as proposed earlier: "Islamic Arts Resources in Central and Eastern Europe and Central Asia". It is being jointly organised by the Islamic Arts Foundation, London, and Al al-Bayt University in Mafraq, Jordan, with a number of Co-Sponsors. These include regional and international bodies like UNESCO, ISESCO and IUOAS as well as academic and cultural institutions like the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, the Moscow Institute of Islamic Civilisation, the Aga Khan Foundation for Culture, the Royal Society of Fine Arts, Amman, the Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest, and the World of Islam Festival Trust, London. Relevant details appear elsewhere in this issue.

Ottoman Art from the Khalili Collection

TIM STANLEY

The Nasser D Khalili Collection of Islamic Art first came to public attention in 1992, when the first three volumes of the catalogue of the collection appeared. Since that time the publication of Dr Khalili's Islamic holdings has proceeded, and parts of another Khalili collection, that of Meiji art, have been exhibited at the British Museum in London and at the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff. But it was in the summer of 1995 that the real public history of the Islamic collection began, with the opening of the exhibition *Empire of the Sultans, Ottoman Art from the Khalili Collection* at the Musée Rath in Geneva. In 1996, the exhibit travels to London where it will be open in May at the recently completed Brunei Gallery, an elegant addition to the School of Oriental and African Studies, (SOAS), University of London.

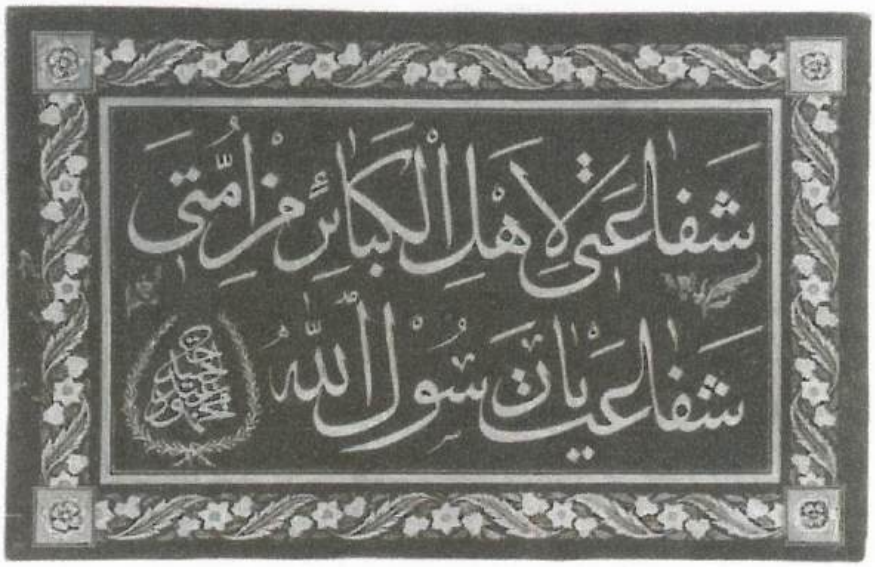
In Geneva, *Empire of the Sultans* was held at the same time as an exhibition of Turkish embroidery at the Musée d'Art et d'Histoire, which drew on the museum's own holdings, and both were designed to coincide with the Tenth International Congress on Turkish Art, which took place in the city in September. The coincidence was an interesting one. Dr Khalili had chosen to create a collection of Islamic art, a category favoured by non-Turkish European specialists. But from it the organisers had been able to create an impressive and representative display of one of the most important periods of Turkish art, the category quite understandably preferred by Turkish scholars.

One piece on show - the 17th-century Khalili Portolan Atlas - has been published in facsimile, and some of the remainder have been accessible through the seven volumes of the collection's catalogue so far published. These catalogues are medium or function-based: three cover Qur'an manuscripts and associated material produced before 1600, while others are devoted to papyrus documents of the 7th to 10th centuries AD, arms and armour, and the 600 finger rings in the collection. The seventh, published in June 1995, is the first of two to deal with ceramics.

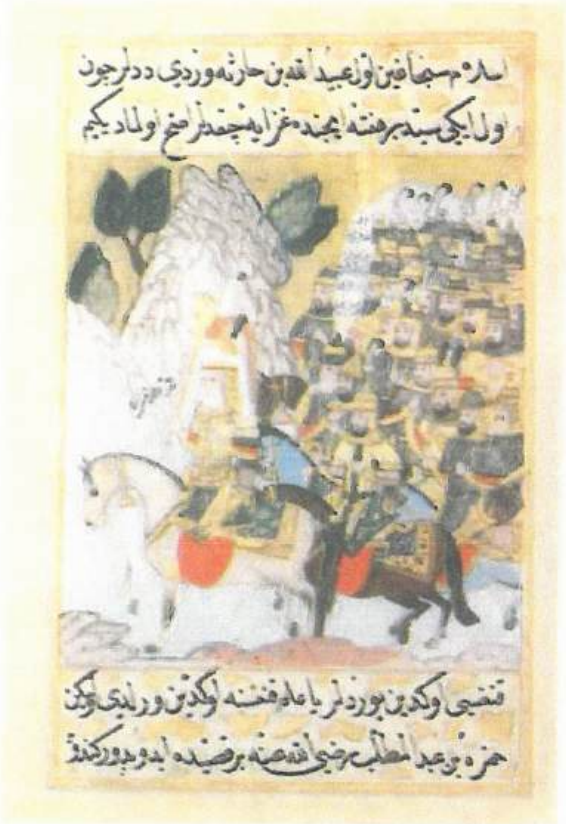
The astonishing diversity of these subjects suggests that Dr Khalili has attempted to be comprehensive in his collecting, and *Empire of the Sultans* is an opportunity to see whether he has been successful. For it is the first exercise in combining material in different categories and from a single period.

In this case the period is a particularly long one, as the Ottoman dynasty was in power for more than 600 years. This in itself was something of an achievement, since in the Islamic Middle East states often lasted no more than a couple of generations. Over this period, which ran from the end of the 13th century until the First World War, the extent of the Ottoman wealth and power underwent a whole series of formidable changes, and these had a profound effect on the artistic life of the empire. But the exhibition was structured around a number of themes designed to provide a context for the 250 objects chosen for display and to show the continuities of Ottoman art. It was organised in two sections, each occupying a floor of the Musée Rath. The central concern of the first was the power of the sultan, which encompassed the subsidiary themes of conquest, secular power and the religious life of the empire. The conquests that both formed and were formed by the sultan's power were represented by Ottoman arms and armour. Most of these were made for actual use in war – chain mail, helmets, plate armour for men and their mounts, daggers and guns – but in their splendour many betray the element of display that was also an important part of function. The sultan's secular authority was represented by a group of imperial decrees, or fermans, written in the stately *divani* script and headed by an exquisitely illuminated *tughra*, the device that combined the reigning sultan's names and titles. The religious aspects of Ottoman power are illustrated primarily by an imposing collection of more than 30 Qur'an manuscripts, dating from the 15th to 19th centuries.

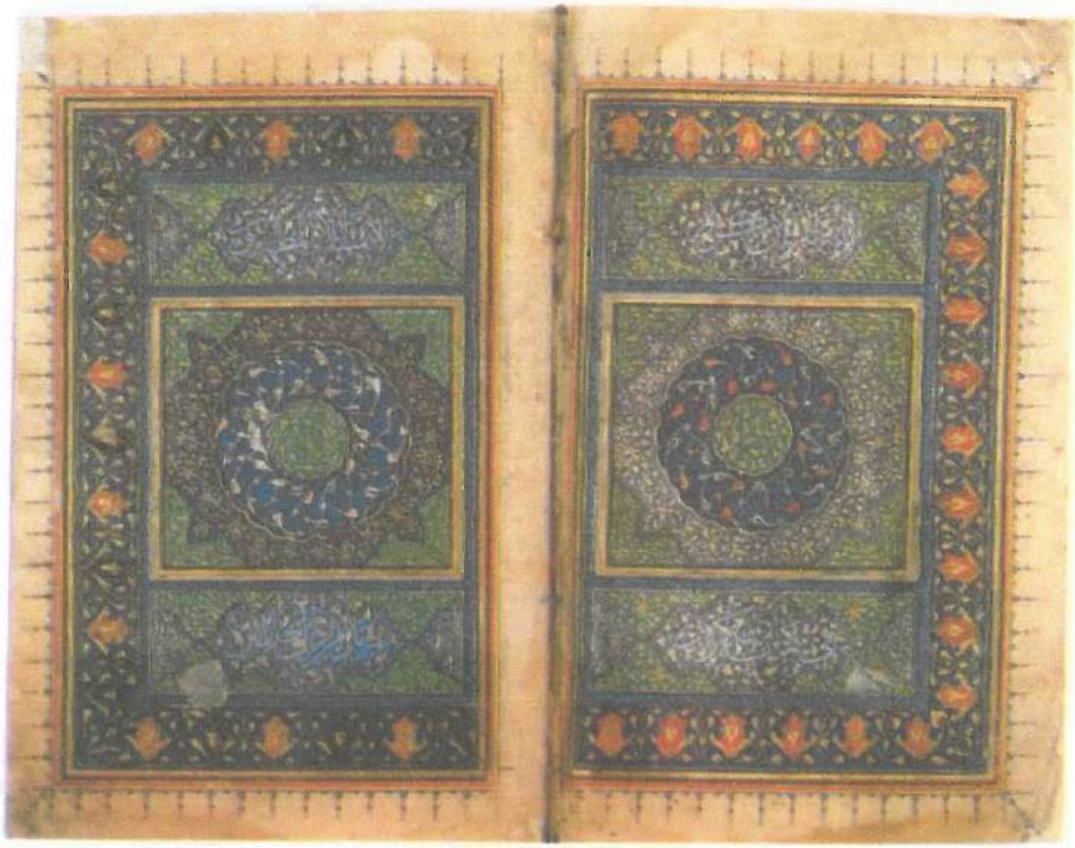
The second section was devoted to the intellectual and artistic life of



Calligraphic panel by Sultan Mahmud II; Istanbul, first half of the 19th century. Dimensions 32.5 × 50.1 cm. The text, which consists of a *du'a'* and a *hadith*, is written in *jali thuluth* in gold. The panel is signed by Mahmud ibn 'Abdulhamid Khan, that is Sultan Mahmud II (r.1803-39).









Four tiles from a monumental Qur'anic frieze; Ottoman Turkey, late 16th century. Dimensions 31 × 31cm each. The stencilled inscription on these four tiles is painted in black under a transparent, bright green glaze. The stencils are those used for the porches of the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem, restored in the 1540s under Suleyman the Magnificent. It is possible that the stencils were adapted shortly afterwards for the Great Mosque at Aleppo, where these tiles may come from. The green colour of the glaze is exceptionally rare for Ottoman tiles. The inscription: "for him a scroll, which he will see spread upon" is from *Surat al-Isra* xvii part of verse 13. **Opposite page, Top, left: A page from the *Siyer-i Nabi*; Istanbul, circa 1594-95.** Dimensions 37.5 × 25.7 and 37 × 26.6 cm. The Khalili Collection has two pages with miniatures from volume iv of the original copy of *Siyer-i Nabi*, the Turkish version of the "Life of Muhammad", written for the library of Sultan Murad iii. recto. **Top, right: The Mikaeloff-Khalili niche carpet with floral field; Cairo, late 16th or early 17th century.** Dimensions 176 × 137cm. This, and another related carpet in the Khalili Collection with a plain field, belong to a relatively small group of Ottoman niche carpets. The group has been invariably attributed to Istanbul or Bursa on the one hand, or Cairo on the other. Archival documentation and more recently scientific analyses, however, favour the latter attribution. There are some variations in technique and design which warrant attribution to different workshops, but the strong similarities suggest that all come from the same region. This carpet has a wool and cotton pile on a wool foundation. It is the most recently discovered example of the floral field group and has all the hallmarks of coming from one of the great workshops. It displays a magnificent large palmette in the niche, and is unusual in that it has a blue-green field and a red border. **Bottom: Single-volume Qur'an, copied for Mercan Agha; Istanbul, circa 1470.** 640 folios, 22.6 × 15cm. The certificate of commissioning states that the Qur'an was copied for al-Janab al-'Ali al-Sayfi Mercan Agha, muhtub al-muluk wa'l-salatin, that is, the Kizlar Aga or Chief of the White Eunuchs at the court of Mehmed II, who owned a large number of buildings in Istanbul shortly after the Ottoman conquest of the city. The two opening spreads contain illumination of the highest quality; the same applies to the closing spread, which encloses the certificate of commissioning.

the empire, in which the arts of the book played the principle role. The decorative arts that form the most immediately attractive aspect of Ottoman art were certainly present, in the form of the fine Iznik ceramics, gorgeous silks and sumptuous metalwork. More unusual were the spoons made from semi-precious materials, such as coral, tortoiseshell and ivory. And there were also a number of true curiosities, such as the set of hemispherical vessels inscribed in Ottoman Turkish with a text referring to Abraham Lincoln! But the main strength of the collection lies in Dr Khalili's holdings of fine manuscripts, bindings, albums and material associated with calligraphy.

As a result, the most striking of the continuities traced by the exhibition was the overwhelming importance of the calligrapher's art. Indeed, this was the first general exhibition devoted to the period to free us from the mesmerising influence of the decorative arts and allowed us to examine this 'fine art' of the Ottomans, both in its pure forms, as the art of pen on paper, and in its applied forms, as an ornamental motif on metalwork, textiles and other wares. After all, Ottoman literati showed no interest in potters, almost no interest in painters, but from the late 16th century onwards they developed a cult of the calligrapher that lasted well after the establishment of the Turkish Republic.

Another, associated theme was longevity. As the examples in *Empire of the Sultans* show, Ottoman decorative arts such as ceramics and textiles reached a peak of excellence, in terms both of design and of technique, in the 16th century. Even in their own time these products were greatly admired by the kings and princes of Renaissance Europe, who competed with the sultans for the output of workshops crated under imperial patronage. But in the 17th century the decorative arts went into a relative decline, as the result of changes in patterns of patronage. This evidence tends to reinforce the notion prevalent among historians that the Ottoman empire hit a high point in the 16th century and then declined for the next three centuries.

In this exhibition, though , the concentration on calligraphy and associated arts made it clear that the forms of art that were most important to the Ottomans themselves did not go into decline during the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries. Indeed, the examples on show substantiate the opposite case: that in the later centuries of Ottoman rule the art was developed to an unprecedented level of refinement. Its continued importance was reflected by the presence in the exhibition of a number of calligraphic panels executed by Mahmud I, the great reforming sultan who reigned between 1808 and 1839, and by his son and successor, Sultan Abdülmecid, who reigned until 1861.

The objects representing the art of the calligrapher also included the copies of the Qur'an displayed in the first section. Many were produced in the capital, Istanbul, which was the great centre for this art, but others were copied in centres as far apart as Shumen in Bulgaria and Cairo. The Qur'an manuscripts included items by the leading names of the Ottoman school, including Sheykh Hamdullah, the founder of the tradition in the late 15th and early 16th century, and Hafiz Osman, the great master of the 17th century.

The exhibition also included several albums in which leading calligraphers, such as the 19th-century master Mehmed Shevki, set out the individual letters and combinations of letters as models of students. When such albums were copied by teachers of Shevkis standing for members of the imperial court, the resources devoted to their decoration could be superb. The same quality was also seen in the calligrapher's implements displayed. These include four examples of the typically Ottoman combination of pen case and inkwell, executed in silver. Another, rectangular pen box is made of jade, while a sixth, cylindrical example is encased in mother-of-pearl.

There can be no doubt that the importance of calligraphy for Ottoman artistic production had its origin in the religion of its rulers. The personal commitment of the sultans to Islam played an important part in the their everyday lives, as it did in those of their ordinary Muslim subjects, and it also played a primary role in legitimising their rule. It is therefore no surprise that they showed such interest in fostering this art, which had first been developed for the copying of the Qur'an, the source of their faith. The same religious faith suffuses many other works displayed in this exhibition. Even the scientific instruments, on show were made with Muslims worship in mind, for they were designed to help the pious believer establish the qiblah, the direction in which Makkah lay.



Tall flask; Ottoman, Iznik, circa 1560-80. Height 46cm. The flask is decorated with alternating sprays of hyacinth and prunus blossom. The variation in the rendering of the sprays indicates that the painting was free-hand. It is exceptionally thinly potted.

"Communal" version of patronage envisaged of Oleg Grabar. Two brass or bronze ewers of the 8th and 9thc from Iran are beautiful, individual examples. Ewers produced during the formative years of Islamic art are often devoid of decoration, depending as this of the 8thc, upon the boldly simple shape of its fluted body, (though its curving handle has an amusing thumb rest shaped as a pomegranate) Usually the 9thc ewer has an overall surface decoration. The pre-Islamic decorative elements - winged palmettes, bunches of grapes, and calyxes - have been adapted and re-interpreted.

Again more "communal" are 6 ceramic bowls, 3 with inscriptions, from the 9thc and 10thc. The shape and opaque white glaze of 9thc bowls from Iraq show the influence of imported Chinese wares – both, however are indigenous in their decorative design. The first, a typical example of this type of ware, with a single word in Arabic, "blessing", in blue Kufic, is of understated elegance. The second, has a six-petalled blossom, splashed in green and outlined in "Muhammadan blue" derived from cobalt, an invention of Iraqi potters. A third 9thc Iraqi piece is a lustre-painted plate, its indigenous design in the usual golden yellow and copper or brownish red of stylised floral branches with chequered leaves. The flattened rim contains the word "Sovereignty" three times in Kufic Arabic between panels of strokes, dots and "peacock eyes" (small circles with central dots.) Lustre painting initially on 8thc Egyptian glassware, is the unique invention of Muslim potters, and first applied to pottery in Iraq. A type of pottery called "splash ware" was produced throughout the Islamic world and a 10thc splash-glazed ceramic bowl from Iran shows the probable influence from China's Tang dynasty in the green, yellow and dark purple colouring of its Islamic design. A 10thc bowl from Iran is from a group of slip-painted pottery known as "black on white wares," which bear strikingly simple decoration of inscriptions, stylised leaves or birds. From Afrasiyab (a suburb of Samarkand in Uzbekistan) and Nishapur, NE Iran, these wares are aesthetically and technically different from contemporary products of W Iran and Iraq. Covered with white engobe (a fine semi-filled clay used for coating) they are painted with slips under the glaze. Around this bowl is a proverb in brownish-black Kufic – "He who talks much, errs much." A beautiful and unusual bowl is from another group of 10thc pottery, painted with polychrome slip on a white ground - black with other colours, the most popular of which was red. Here, the hemispherical spouted bowl is covered with a white engobe and underglaze painted in purplish black and red slips. The decoration is of two motifs placed along the walls. The first of a large, fanlike configuration combines elements such as half-palmettes, peacock eyes and leaves; the second is a pair of half palmettes, peacock eyes and leaves; flanking the spout. A





Left: Silver Spoon and Fork. Iran, 12th century. This ingeniously designed folding spoon and fork was cast in silver and inlaid (with niello - a black alloy). The spoon contains a bird encircled with kufic inscriptions praising God, while a winged lion appears in the roundel below the fork. **Right: Sufi watching the Poet Sadi in Ecstasy.** From the *Subhat al-abrar* of Jami, dated 1564/5. Made for Abd Allah Bahadur Khan, Uzbekistan. This painting depicts a mystic watching the thirteenth-century poet Sadi whirling in ecstasy. In the panel above, angels shower the poet with celestial light as a reward for composing a couplet in praise of God.

Left: Brass Basin. Made for an officer of Sultan al-Malik al-Nasir, Egypt or Syria, first half 14th century. The shape of this silver inlaid basin and the bold inscriptions that decorate it are characteristic of fourteenth-century metalwork produced in Egypt or Syria. Arabic phrases encircling the exterior praise the owner, while those inside the rim identify him as '[the officer] of al-Malik al-Nasir'. Incised at the bottom is the statement 'made for my master Abd Allah ibn Ahmad'.

Treasures from Kuwait at Fitzwilliam

PATRICIA JELLICOE

Esin Atil's dedicatory words in the Catalogue for this Exhibition could not be more true: (despite national and personal losses that resulted from the tragic invasion of Kuwait) Sheikh Nasir al-Ahmad al-Sabah and Sheikha Hussah al-Salem al-Sabah "decided to proceed with (this) project as a testament of their dedication to the preservation of Islamic culture and unfaltering support of the arts. In doing so, they have demonstrated the essence of true patronage."

In these days of narrowing and self-righteous attitudes among many, it is timely that the Al-Sabah collection is shown with pride in the finest traditions and achievements of the Islamic past. It should open new horizons for many in the West, and inspire a renewed and fruitful creativity in the Islamic world.

Fortunately leaving Kuwait just days before the invasion, the Collection has been exhibited at St. Petersburg in Russia, and seven Museums across the United States and another in Canada, before returning to Europe where it has been in Paris, the Hague and Florence and in 1995 came to the Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, England. It is due to be exhibited later in Frankfurt, Germany.

The Catalogue of the Exhibition of 107 objects, (and an additional 19), culled from over 20,000 in Kuwait's collection, is superbly produced and an excellent reference book. A map, dynastic tables and suggested readings back up the various sections contributed by noted Islamic scholars and by three who have been or still are involved with the al-Sabah collection: Marilyn Jenkins, who gives an introduction to the collection and was instrumental in preparing the 1983 inaugural exhibition; Manuel Keene, visiting curator 1982-1984, who writes on his speciality, jewellery and precious objects, and Ghada H Qaddumi, curator since 1984, who with Manuel Keene, wrote the Catalogue entries. Oleg Grabar in writing on "Patronage in Islamic Art," explains the "Arts and Society". The four periods within which Islamic art falls have been written by Estelle Whelan on "Early Islam: Emerging Patterns" (662-1050); Jonathan M Bloom on "The Classical Period" (1050-1250); Sheila S Blair on "The Post classical Period" (1250-1500) and Walter B Denny on "Late Islam: The Age of Empires (1500-1800). Colour photography, notoriously difficult of these objects, is beautifully achieved by Gordon H Robertson, whose vivid illustrations recall one's strong impressions when first seeing these varied ceramics, metals, ivories, jewels, carpets, calligraphy, and miniatures.

Of the 23 objects illustrating Early Islam, a marble capital from a column in the palace of Madinat al-Zahra near Cordoba in Spain, begun in 936 by the Caliph Abd al-Rahman and continued by his son al-Hakam II, entirely covered with deeply carved acanthus leaves and alternating rows of projecting leaves, illustrates the patronage of the Caliph, particularly in architecture, which Oleg Grabar writes of as the first of his three divisions, (the other two being "Urban" and Communal"). It continues the tradition of the original Ummayad Caliphs with the 5th Caliph Abd al-Malik's building of the first great Islamic architectural monument – the Dome of the Rock – in Jerusalem in the late 7th-early 8thc.

A 9thc free-blown glass goblet of blue-green glass, decorated with applied blue and blue-green threads, is from Iraq or Iran. (The earliest glass vessels were produced by blowing into molds; (later they were free blown) Syria, the centre in pre-Islamic times, retained its reputation for fine wares with the coming of Islam. 8thc fragments have been found in Kufa, south of Baghdad, and Fostat (Old Cairo). A 10thc free blown shallow bowl or lid illustrates the wheel-cut technique – derived probably from stone or stucco carving – a method used in Egypt, Iran and Iraq.

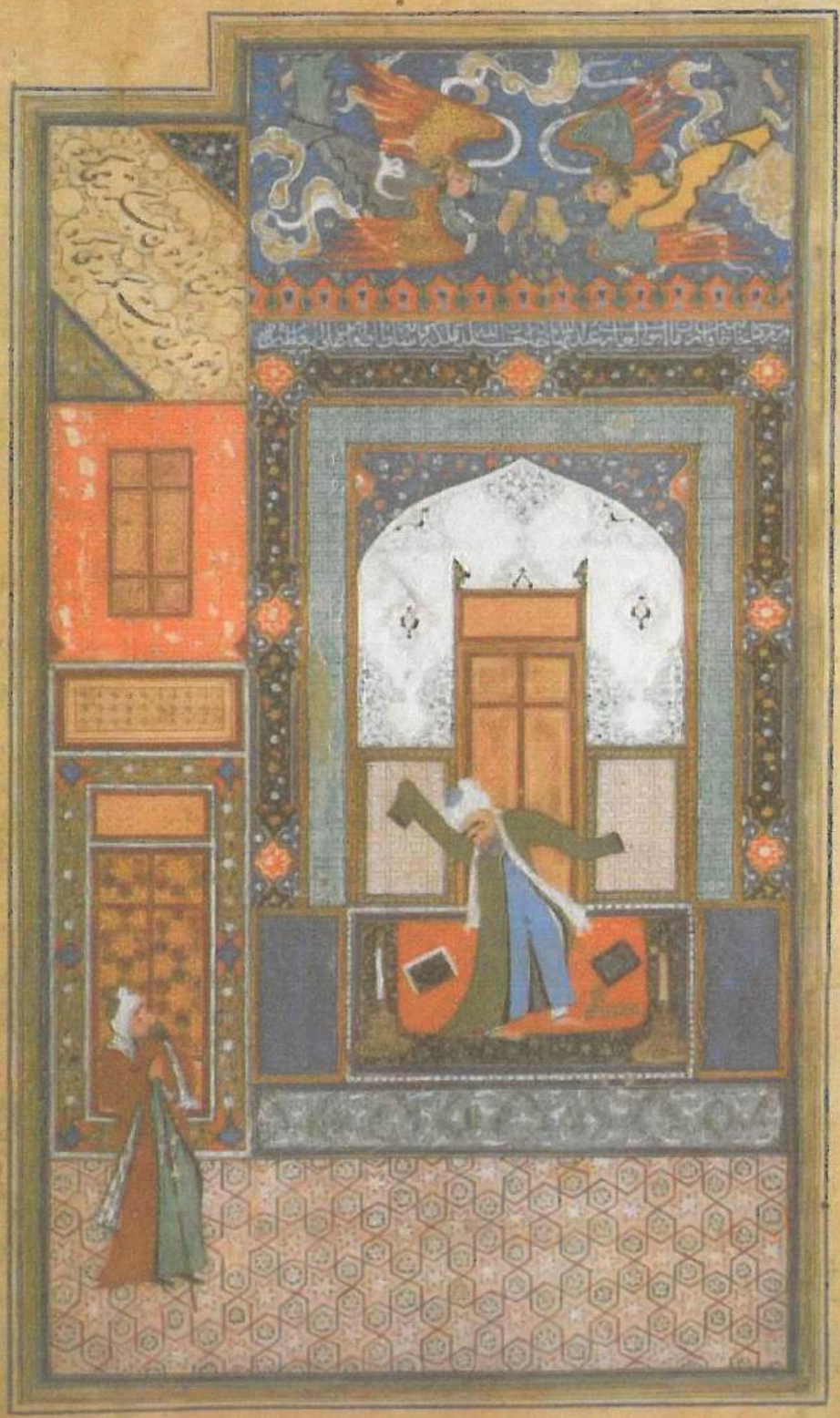
Two rock crystal bottles from the 9th-early 11c made in Egypt, indicate that Cairo – known for objects of the highest quality - was an active centre earlier than suggested by ancient sources. One with a 16thc. Spanish silver-gilt mount, has an inscription - "blessing and felicity" - in Kufic. Many pieces of rock crystal, cherished in Egypt and collected in treasuries, found their way to Europe, the silver-gilt mounted bottle belonging to the Hever Castle Collection in Kent, England.

Two earlier glass objects are unusual: from Iraq or Egypt is a very rare tiny hemispherical vessel in the mosaic glass technique, or "millefiori", a technique which dates to the 2nd millennium BC. Though popular in Hellenistic and Roman times, few such pieces were made in the Islamic world. A 9-10thc molded glass bowl, its ribs encircling the walls bellow the rim, resembles 1stc Roman examples. This technique was fully exploited by Muslim artisans, especially the Syrians, who were probably responsible for its revival.

Such glass objects must have been in princely palaces, while the 8thc oval gold earring, (though its beaded wire and decorative motifs are associated with pre-Islamic traditions), has a strong overall composition which belongs to the early Islamic era. This may place it among the oldest extant examples of Islamic jewellery. The wives of several of the early Caliphs were themselves generous donors of rich gifts to mosques and pilgrims. (In the mid-9thc, one even broke the taboo on construction of mausoleums – in force since the time of the Prophet - with an octagonal domed canopy on her son's mausoleum near Samarra, which resulted in a proliferation throughout the Islamic world.)

Again, more for princely usage is the ivory pyxis, a cylindrical box, carved from one piece of ivory with profuse foliage inhabited by animals and birds. However in 11thc Spain, some think that while Cordoba was a palace workshop, Cuenca may have produced ivories such as this, for a rich market.

Metal ewers and ceramic bowls must surely come under the third



chain of black dots – perhaps representing drops of water pouring towards the spout – connects the two main motifs.

An 8 3/4 inch lustre-painted ceramic 10thc jar from Egypt typifies those commonly produced in Egypt and Iraq during the 10thc when lustreware with monochrome colours ranging from pale golden yellow to rich copper red was a further development from the earlier colours.

The pre-eminence of geometry and astronomy in the Islamic world, vital to them as fore-runners in sea trading, is shown in a planisphere, or flat, brass astrolabe, dated 927/8 from Iraq. This is the earliest known dated astrolabe and bears the name of its maker. Flat astrolabes were more common than the linear and spherical types. Important also to a religious community, was to determine the direction of the Kaaba in Makkah, to which all Muslims must face during prayer.

Above all the arts was, and is, writing, for through it is transmitted the Word of Allah, or God. Through calligraphy, the patronage of the Caliph became twofold: firstly as spiritual successor, to supply with the verses of the Quran the needs of the Muslim communities in their mosques, and secondly through the Diwan, to codify orders and agreements for the governing of a huge empire of differing peoples and languages.. Estelle Whelan points out that it was in fact the secretaries of the Abbasid Diwan who first codified several basic varieties of Arabic script and thus from the 9th and 10th the rationalisation of fine Arabic writing. These standards eventually came to predominate in the copying of all secular and religious texts, including the Quran. The earliest dated Quran manuscript of this type known to have survived was in fact copied in about 1000 by Ibn al-Bawwab, a librarian. Copies of Qur'anic texts from the first four centuries of Islam were copied by the Ulema, leaders of the Muslim religious community, and many of the finest Kufic Qur'an manuscripts had obvious liturgical functions. They were divided into equal section to be read publicly in specified periods of time (eg one thirtieth on each day of the month) and often provided with ornaments to indicate the fourteen points at which the congregation should stop for prostration and prayer. Diacritics are marked in colours as an aid to public readings.

Early Quranic texts are distinguished by their horizontal format, monumental script with only a few lines on each parchment page written in black script - rare examples for rulers or wealthy patrons were in gold. An example in gold is in the compact, angular letters characteristic of the 9thc Kufic style associated with Kairouan in Tunisia. Another folio from the 10thc contains verses in sixteen lines with the fluid horizontals so attractive - the 5th verse is marked by the Arabic letter for H, which has the numerical value of 5. A third folio from the first half of the 10thc contains only three lines of striking dignity. The black Kufic illustrates the development in Tunisia at this period from the angular earliest Kufic, rounding these strokes and increasing the depth of the curves. Two folios are of the late 10thc, also possibly from Tunisia; the text of one is in broken cursive or curvilinear Kufic. The second folio - also from the 93 leaves of a fragmented Quran - is the frontispiece or finispiece, its decorative rectangle of geometric designs painted in gold accentuated by green, blue, brown and black, and surrounded with a floral border.

22 objects are shown from the Classical Period (1050-1250) - 3 manuscripts, 8 ceramics including 2 jars, 2 bottles and a glass jug, an ivory hunting horn and carved wooden panel, and in metals a bowl, a candlestick, a penbox and a mirror as well as a pair of gold bracelets and a pair of enamelled gold earrings.

As Jonathan Bloom points out in his essay, some of the most splendid examples of classical Islamic art are from this period and the comparatively large number of surviving objects in various media with an increased use of decorative inscriptions identifying the patron or class of patron has considerably increased our knowledge. Historical, literary and legal documents, scarce from earlier times, have further provided us with information. The diminishing power of the Caliphate, the arrival of the Seljuk Turks and later the Mongols highlighted change during the period. While lustrously glazed tiles decorated the magnificent buildings, the majority of building works were additional and needed fortifications added. The minaret was an innovation and madressahs and caravanserais proliferated. Illustrated manuscripts, now on paper which had been introduced in the 8th c, were more widely produced and included fables and stories indicating a reasonably well-educated bourgeois audience. Inlaid metalwork and lustre-painted ceramics, two of the most important techniques, reached their apogee, while figural ornament appeared widely.

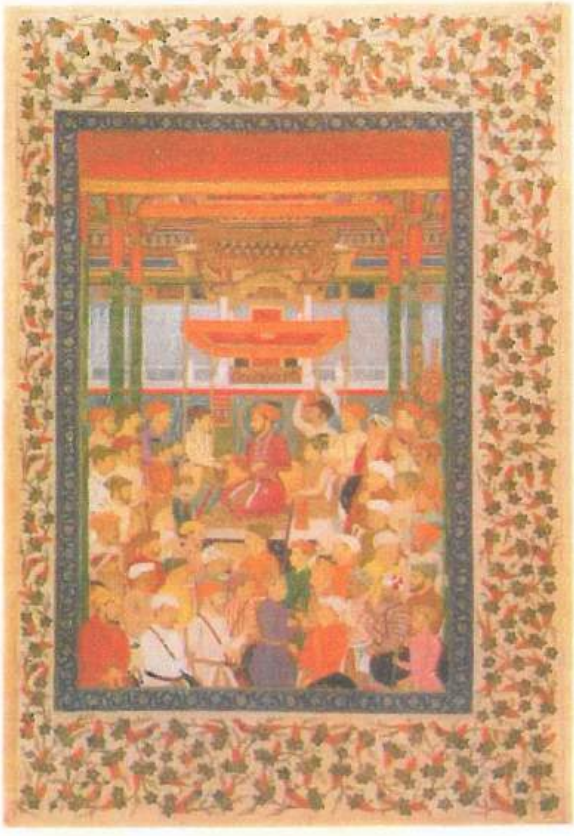
Of the 3 manuscripts, two are from 11thc Iran, a double folio and a single Quran folio. Two significant developments had emerged by this time: the vertical format was favoured over the horizontal and the use of paper instead of parchment. The beautifully balanced double folio is written in the "eastern Kufic" script developed in the 10thc and in use until the 13thc and in chapter headings later. The long verticals and "swooping extenders" have immense aesthetic appeal. The text of the single folio is in a variant of the 10thc Kufic, and erroneously known as "Quarmatian." The horizontal letters are more compact and the verticals much taller than the earlier Kufic producing as Bloom says a majestic appearance. The diacriticals, written as short vowels instead of in coloured dots, made for easier reading. The third manuscript, dated 1230/31 and 1237/38, is from Turkey and contains four treatises on the theory, construction and use of the astrolabe written in Arabic by four scholars. The folio here is from the famed 11c scholar, Al-Biruni's section, whose work on the astrolabe became the standard text for this instrument.

A ceramic bowl with pierced decoration is from a group of extremely fine 12thc wares, often with pierced or carved designs in an attempt to emulate the translucency of Chinese Sung porcelains. This bowl has splashes of turquoise blue while its understated decoration of leaves and blossoms is purely Islamic. Four lustre painted bowls are from Egypt, Syria and two from Iran. The 12thc Egyptian bowl is typical of Fatimid wares decorated with a single animal – here, a lion and leaping hares – of an earthenware body covered in opaque white glaze and painted in copper red lustre. This method gave Egyptian potters greater freedom than with the earlier lustreware of Egypt and Iran, which were painted within white contours. A late 12th-early 13thc lustre painted ceramic bowl from Syria represents wares often attributed to Raqqa.

continued on page 141









Top, left: Abu Muhammad Ilyas ibn Yusuf ibn Mu'ayyad Nizami Ganjavi. *Khamsa*. Copier: Muhammad ibn Qavam al-Shirazi. 950 AH/ 1543 AD. Shiraz. **Top, right:** *Kitab i Hashi'ish*. Translated by Ghiyas al-Din Muhammad Razvi (Razavi) and Ishaq ibn Hunayn. 1608 AH/ 1658 AD. Probably Isfahan. **Above, left:** Abu Muhammad al-Qasim ibn 'Ali al-Hariri al-Basri, *Maqamat*. Iraq, ca. 1240. **Above, right:** *Muraqqa' Court reception of Shah Jahan*. Mughal School, ca. 1635 AD. **Opposite:** *Muraqqa'* 'Imad al-Hasani. *Portrait of a man*. Isfahan, Deccan. 16th-18th centuries.

Pages of Perfection: Islamic Manuscripts from St Petersburg

MARIA REZVAN

It is Austerlitz, 2nd December, 1805. The victorious Napoleon is inspecting the battlefield. Among the Russian captives, he sees the 17-year-old Count Paul Sukhtelen, cornet of the 4th troop of the Cavalier Guard Regiment. His head has been wounded by a sabre chop and his right leg by a cannon ball splinter. Napoleon refers slightingly to the youth of the captive. Sukhtelen bewilders Napoleon, answering him with the famous verse from "Sid" by Cornelle:

"I am young, it is true, but to the spirit well-born.

Napoleon ordered a painting of this episode for the Tuileries Palace.

Paul Sukhtelen, one of the prototypes for Andrey Boltonskiy in "War and Peace", by Leon Tolstoi, made a successful military career, taking part in the numerous battles in Europe and the East. Being a true representative of the brilliant generation of Russian nobility of the first quarter of the 19th century, he was widely educated. His various interests were reflected specifically in the collecting of Oriental manuscripts. Years passed and 35 of them found their places on the shelves of the store room of the famous Saint Petersburg branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies, Russian Academy of Sciences (the former Musee Asiatique de l'Academie des Sciences Imperiale, founded in 1818.

Several of these manuscripts have been shown as part of an exhibition organized by the above-mentioned institute and ARCH Foundation of Lugano, Switzerland. After a successful presentation at the Musee du Petit Palais, Paris (September 1993 to January 1994), the two-year exhibition tour included the Villa Favorita, Lugano (June - August 1995) and the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (September - December 1995) and is booked at further venues.

The manuscripts show the fates of dozens and dozens of people and their own destinies, sometimes fortunate, sometimes tragic. The 67 masterpieces of Muslim miniature painting and calligraphy which are presented at the exhibition have been really lucky. Throughout all the ups and downs of Russian history,they were carefully stored and studied by Russian scholars. Now the widespread interest in them enables Franchesca von Habsburg, Founder and President of Art Restoration for Cultural Heritage (ARCH) Foundation to start a successful international campaign to assist the Institute of Oriental Studies in a continuing effort to conserve and promote the priceless treasures of Islamic manuscripts for the next millennium.

Around five million Islamic manuscripts were created between the second half of the 7th and the beginning of the 20th centuries AD. About 630,000 volumes have survived up to our day and only about 200,000 go back to the Middle Ages. 10,000 such volumes are stored now in the Academic collection in Saint Petersburg. Among them one can find examples of the finest and rarest Islamic paintings and calligraphy ever created. This places this collection on a par with the British Library, London, the Bibliotheque Nationale of Paris, the Topkapi Sarayi Library, Istanbul, the Bodleian Library, Oxford and the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin.

The 67 manuscripts (as some MSS are unbound, visitors can see about 200 exhibits) enable the organizers to show a vivid picture of the Muslim culture which flourished across the enormous territory from Muslim Spain to China and from the Volga region to India. The unique role played by the Muslim civilization as the bridge between Hellenism and the Renaissance is reflected in the parchment, papyrus, leather and paper folios containing official documents and verses, mathematical treatises and court panegyrics, dogmatic discussions and descriptions of military exercises.

During the 13th - 18th centuries, book miniatures were the most widespread kind of painting in the Middle East. At the courts of the supreme rulers in Baghdad, Tabriz, Herat, Istanbul, Isfahan and Samarqand, as well as in the capitals of their vassal princes (Shiraz and Yazd), there were special workshops in which masters of hand-produced books created masterpieces such as may well be compared with the works of the Renaissance giants.

The manuscripts from the collection of the Institute of Oriental Studies represent many schools of miniature painting which spread, during the 13th - 19th centuries, from Istanbul to Bukhara and Kashmir and from Baghdad to Shiraz and Delhi. To mention just a few of them: the Iraqi (Baghdad) school of the first half of the 13th century; the mid-14th century Tabriz school; the mid-15th century Yazd school; the Shiraz schools of the 15th and 16th centuries; the Herat schools of the 15th and 16th centuries; the Bukhara school of the first third of the 16th century; the 16th century Tabriz school and the 17th-century Isfahan school. These were made famous by such masters as Sadeghi Afshar, Riza-yi 'Abbasi, Mu'in Musawwir, Muhammad-Zaman, 'Ali- Quli Jabadar and others. Finally, the little-known local Kashmir-Darwaz school of the 18th-19th centuries is also well represented in this collection.

Long ago, artistic writing became an autonomous kind of art in the Muslim countries. In certain times, calligraphy was even more honoured and widespread than book miniatures. The works of the masters of calligraphy were of exclusively high value and often gained royal support.
Progressing chronologically from leather, papyrus and parchment to the earliest works on paper dating from the 10th-11th centuries and from monumental Kufi to simple cursive Naskh, then to decorative and ceremonial scripts, Thuluth and Nasta'liq, the exhibition gives an overview of the major developments in the Muslim art of calligraphy, one of the main distinctive genres of



Islamic art in general.

The exhibition starts with the presentation of the 8th - 10th century Quranic folios written in early Arabic scripts Hijazi and Kufi, reflecting the first stages of development of Arabic writing as well as the evolution of the teaching of grammar. Among them can be seen one of the world's largest fragments of the Qur'an (nearly one quarter of the sacred text), which is extremely rare and regarded almost as one of the sacred relics of Islam.

The passion for scientific subjects such as geometry, medicine, geography, history and law, which was one of the most characteristic features of the Islamic civilization in the 10th - 12th centuries, is reflected in the series of manuscripts. Probably one of the most interesting of them is the copy of Euclid's Book of Elements, translated from the original Greek text into Arabic and illustrated by an anonymous calligrapher in 1188.

The poetry, including the earliest known copy of Jarir's Diwan, copied not later than 1028, and literature of the epoch are also shown in the exhibition. An illuminated copy of Maqamat, by Abu Muhammad al-Qasim al-Hariri (1054 - 1122), created in Iraq and datable between 1242 and 1258, has gained world fame, as mentioned in nearly all textbooks on Islamic art. This manuscript, as well as several others presented in the exhibition, is marked by a vivid manifestation of Islamic fundamentalism: the faces of many figures have been either rubbed out or symbolically crossed through.

A splendidly illuminated 14th century copy of an Arabic version of the famous cosmography, 'Adja'ib al-makhluqat wa-ghara'ib al-mawjudat, (The Marvels of Creation and the Rarities of Existence), by Zakariya' al-Qazwini (1203 - 1283), the greatest author in the 'adja'ib genre - mirabilia of Muslim literature - is another pearl of the exhibition. Al-Qazvini is often compared with such celebrated authors as Herodotus and Plinius. His works, particularly his 'Adja'ib al-makhluqat, translated later into Persian and Turkish, greatly influenced the world's opinion of the Muslim Orient. Geographical frames of the work cover the Near and Middle East, Central and South East Asia, China, India, Ceylon, the Caucasus and countries of the Mediterranean, North Africa, Andalusia,.etc. Al-Qazwini visited many countries, travelling with trade caravans. He also recorded many stories told by pilgrims, merchants and dervishes.

Some of these stories and descriptions are based on some fantastic oral tradition: one of the author's aims was to amuse his readers. Hundreds of miniatures present the whole picture of the universe, planets and constellations, angels and monsters, sphere of the air, water and earth and strange people, as well as representations of the vegetable and animal kingdoms.

The 15th-century Mamluk illustrated manuscript on the art of war entitled Kitab al-makhzun fi jami' al-funun is a real masterpiece of its genre. This work of the 14th-century author, Ibn Abi Khazzam, represents a typical furusiyya treatise, being a manual of the art of war and a text-book for arranging military court festivals at the same time. The creation of the manuscript dates back to the 50s-60s of the 15th century, when Jarbash al-Silahdar al-Maliki al-Ashrafi, a Mamluk military authority, ordered copies of several works on military art for his library. Following the example of Sultan Qa'it Bey, he also ordered a copy of the Kitab al-Makhzun. The years that have passed since then have scattered al-Ashrafi's library all over the world, but two manuscripts from that library, Khazzam's Kitab al-Makhzun and Al-Tadbirat al-Sultaniyya, by Muhammad b. al-Nasiri, have now been reunited in the Institute's collection.

Kitab al-Makhzun became the object of scholars' attention as early as the beginning of the 19th century. The treatise was often quoted and referred to, but then nearly totally forgotten by Western scholars. The publishers of the materials of a similar manuscript stored in the Keir collection have never mentioned the Saint Petersburg copy. Yet a comparison of the texts and illustrations definitely shows that these are parallel copies of the same work made nearly simultaneously.

Among the other masterpieces presented at the exhibition may be mentioned the copy of the famous love poem Khusrau u Shirin, dated 1421 and made for Herat Prince Baisunghur by Ja'far ibn 'Ali al-Baisunghuri, one of the greatest calligraphers of the 15th century.

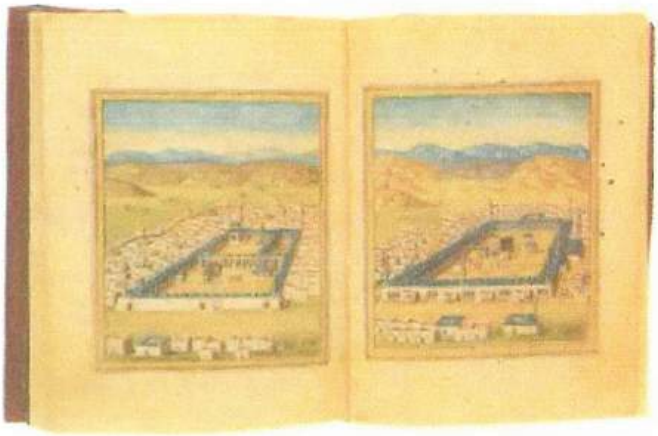
19th century illuminated Qur'an frontispieces from the Middle East, Central Asia and West Africa are the final chord in the symphony of Muslim art presented at the exhibition.

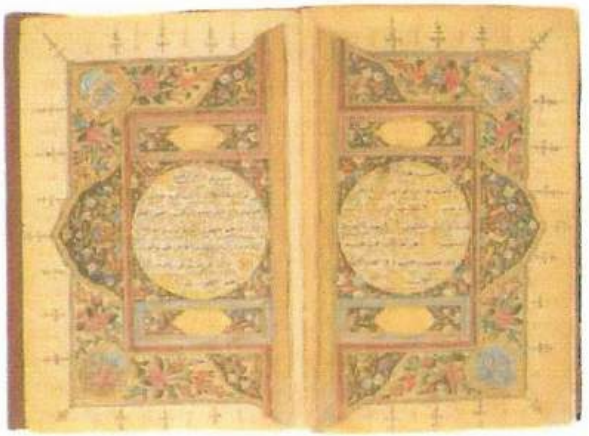
Visitors will not only be able to buy the exhibition catalogue in French, English, Italian and German, written by leading Saint Petersburg and New York scholars and containing 205 illustrations (published by Electa, Milan), but can also watch the video film The Book of Kings, by Liliane de Kermadec, based on the 16th-century Shahnama manuscript mentioned above. Norman Ross publishers (New York) is preparing for the exhibition a reprint of the Institute catalogues of Arabic and Persian-Tajik manuscripts with English translations of the introductions, tables of contents and subject indexes, as well as with addenda and corrigenda. A new and unique international edition of the famous Saint Petersburg Albume (Muraqqa'), published by Mondradori, as well as a short Muraqqa' catalogue (68 colour illustrations) written by O. Akimushkin (Electa, Milan), will also be available. Several articles from the first issue of Manuscripta Orientalia, a new international English language magazine for oriental manuscript research, are devoted to the manuscripts presented at the exhibition and to the Saint Petersburg collection in general.

Acad.Ignaty Krachlovsky, the patriarch of Russian Arabists, once wrote:

"They besiege me from all sides: valuable yellowed parchments with their severe Kufic characters or the peaceful writings of the monks of Sinai; the shining pages of waxed paper, luxurious examples from the libraries of the Mamluk Sultans; the poor and modest but priceless autographs of the scholars and the early notes of their pupils; and the assured and splendid, but cold and lifeless, Nashki characters of professional copyists. Certain pages are clean and fresh as though they have just left the hands of their original possessors; others are burnt or soiled - traces of misfortunes which have not spared them, just as they do not spare men. Manuscripts deprived of pages at the beginning and end seem like poor invalids and like a sombre reproach to human cruelty. It saddens me to see these gaping

continued on page 146













Top left: Arabic Manuscript, *Dala'il Al Khairat*. Turkey. 1741 AD. 14.4 cm x 10.7 cm. **Top right: Arabic Manuscript, *Dala'il Al Khairat*.** Turkey. 1741 AD. 14.4 cm x 10.7 cm. **Middle left: Square Gilt and Enamelled Glass Bottle.** North India. late 18th century AD. Height. 13.4 cm. **Middle right:** Frontispiece. **Above left: Fritware Bowl with Blue Stripes.** Iran. First half of 13th century AD. Diameter 19.5 cms. **Blue Glazed Min'ai Bowl.** Iran. late 12th, early 13th century AD. Diameter 18.5cms.

The Kanoo Collection in Bahrain

SAMAR AL GAILANI

The pioneering interest by private collectors, both in the Islamic and non Islamic worlds, to acquire and preserve Islamic art and heritage began some 200 years ago at a time when many of the magnificent products of Muslim artists and artisans were seriously threatened with oblivion or loss. As a result, and particularly from the middle of the last century, these laudable collecting activities formed the core of some of the great collections of Islamic art in national and private museums throughout the world, particularly in Europe.

The Arab and Islamic worlds have seen in the recent past, a cultural awakening and an increasing and accelerated interest in the Islamic heritage in all fields of the applied and practical arts. This interest resulted in the formation and growth of some excellent private collections of Islamic art in the Gulf Co-operation Council Countries, amongst the most distinguished of which is that of Dr. Abdul Latif Jassim Kanoo in Bahrain This magnificent collection was recently the subject of an important book: A Selection from Dr. Abdul Latif Jassim Kanoo's Collection of Islamic Art, published in Bahrain in 1995 by Beit Al Qur'an. Dr. Kanoo's Islamic Collection is a composite one covering a wide range of subjects and materials which illustrate the progress, dexterity and great art of the Muslim artisans throughout their illustrious history from the early days of Islam until well into the 20th century.

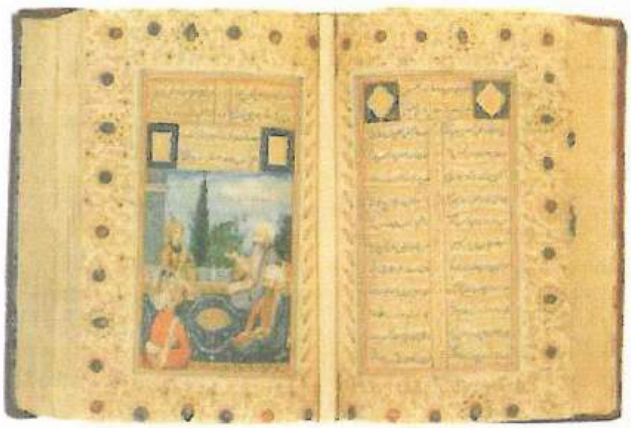
Dr. Abdul Latif Jassim Kanoo is a member of a prominent Bahraini family. He was educated in Britain and the United Sates and on his return to Bahrain took a number of key positions in public life and community service. He is the founder and Executive Chairman of Beit Al Qur'an and an active collector and specialist in Islamic Art. Dr. Kanoo's collection of Islamic works began originally with a concentration on the acquisition of Holy Quranic and other religious and scientific manuscripts. A large number of these magnificent works were collected from a variety of sources from numerous parts of the world, both East and West, through public sales or private purchases.

It was with great and concerted dedication that the collection was built, and as it expanded, Dr. Kanoo realised that keeping such an important and all-encompassing collection of Islamic manuscripts, and Holy Qur'ans in particular, was an awesome responsibility which transcended the concept of ownership and became the concept of custodianship. It was this feeling that inspired Dr. Kanoo to initiate the concept of Beit Al Qur'an, the principal functions of which were to be an International Islamic Institute presenting Islam and its culture to people across the world and to be a living museum for this great heritage of magnificent manuscripts keeping it in perpetuity for future generations. This collection was subsequently donated to Beit Al Qur'an and this formed the foundation of the Beit Al Qur'an's Al Hayat Museum Collection, a collection which can now lay claim to being one of the most important and comprehensive in the area.

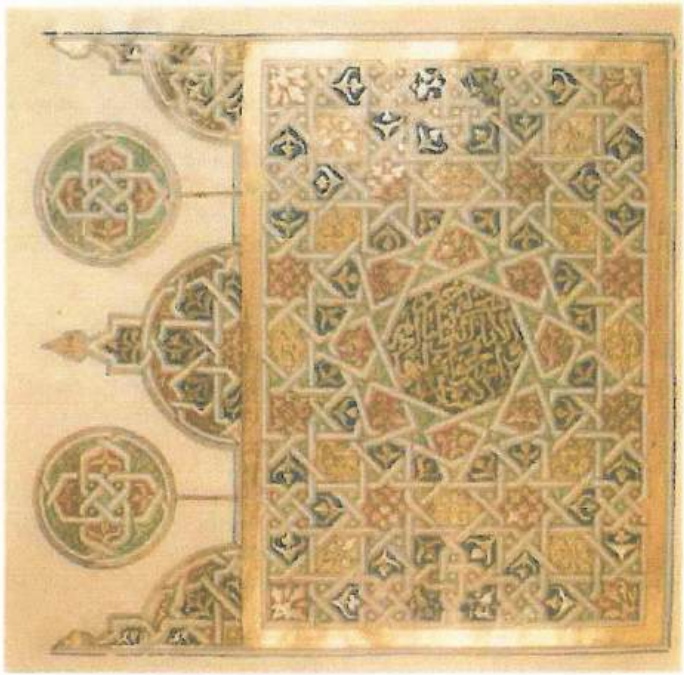
The Kanoo collection diversified as it grew to include not only manuscripts but all other forms of art, from all parts of the Islamic world, from the earliest eras to this day. Dr Kanoo always strove to establish in his collection a comprehensive and wide variety of materials and artefacts to give the broadest picture of Islamic art and its massive contribution to human art in general. Dr. Kanoo's collecting activities are not insular or self-indulgent, for he is determined that the maximum number of people in Bahrain and elsewhere should enjoy and appreciate this collection through its exposure in exhibitions, seminars, lectures and also through the publication of study papers dealing with its different aspects. Indeed, this process has already started with early exhibitions held at Bahrain Archaeological Society and Dar Al Athar Al Islamia in Kuwait, followed by a major exhibition of some highlights of the collection in the Bahrain National Museum, staged under the patronage of His Highness Sheikh Khalifa bin Salman Al Khalifa, the Prime Minister of Bahrain, in December 1991.

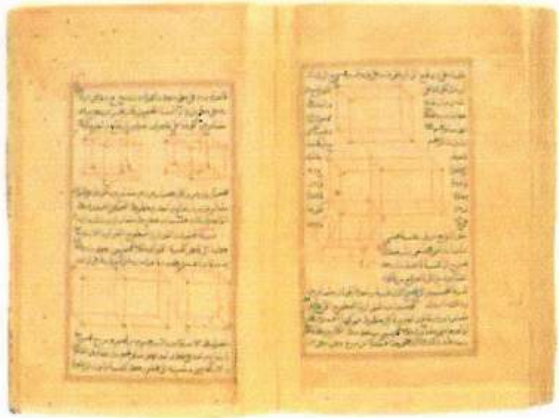
Another important exhibition was held in March 1992 at Beit Al Qur'an: 'The 12 Rab'i Al Awal Exhibition'. It included manuscripts from the Kanoo Collection relating to the life and sayings of the Prophet Mohammed (God's Praise and Peace be Upon Him). A further two exhibitions were held at Beit Al Qur'an in March 1993 and February 1995, the first dealing with the history of the two holy cities of Makkah and Madinah, and the second held on the occasion of the publication of the book: A Selection from Dr. Abdul Latif Jassim Kanoo 's Collection of Islamic Art. The exhibits for these two major exhibitions were provided by Dr. Kanoo on temporary loan to Beit Al Qur'an. These activities will continue, and other material will be published and exhibitions held both in Bahrain and elsewhere to expose the different aspects of the Kanoo Collection.

The purpose of the publication of the book: A Select10n from the Dr. Abdul l Latif Jassim Kanoo's Collection of Islamic Art is to describe in the broadest terms the importance, variety and genius of Islamic art found within the Kanoo Collection. The items chosen for the book were not necessarily the finest nor the most rare in the collection. They were chosen for contextual purposes to highlight the Collection and its range One of the most difficult tasks that faced the team responsible for compiling the material for this book was to select individual items from the very wide range available. Dr Kanoo's help and advice were invaluable in this area, for he alone had the most comprehensive view of the collection, including a detailed knowledge of the history of each and every item within it. The difficult final choice inevitably left Dr Kanoo with some sense of denial, for many an important or significant item had to













Top left: Illustrated Persian Manuscript. India. 19th century AD. 11.6 cm x 10.5 cm. **Top right: Illustrated Anatomical Treatise**. Iran, 1597 AD. 25 cm x 17.8 cm. **Middle left:** Frontispiece. **Middle Right: Mathematical Treatise on Euclid**. Iran. mid 16th century AD. 21.6 cm x 13.5cm. **Above left: Bowl with Bird Motif**. Iran. 10-11th century AD. Diameter 19.3cms. **Above right: Lustre Bowl with Seated Figure**. Iran. 13th century AD. Diameter 14.8 cms.

be left out for lack of space. A final choice was made, however, to give the readers a glimpse of this great collection in Bahrain. The book is not an academic study nor was it meant to be one. It is an introduction to a private collection, putting it in the wider context of Islamic Art in general. It is meant to enlighten the reader as to this rich seam of Islamic art and culture and excite his or her interest in looking further into this heritage.

The Kanoo Collection of Islamic Art stands at present at over 5000 pieces. It covers the fields of pottery and ceramics, glass, metalwork, arms and armour, rock crystal and jade, silver, ivory, wood, carved stonework, jewellery, books and manuscripts, textiles, fabrics, coins, scientific instruments, manuscripts on Islamic science and medicine and a wide range of objets d'art. While the collection is reasonably strong in all the areas it covers, it is particularly so on the subjects of pottery and ceramics, glass, metalwork and Islamic coinage. While most of these subjects are covered in outline in the present publication, the subject of Islamic coinage in the collection will be dealt with in future detailed studies, as will the various other elements in the collection, particularly the manuscripts on Islamic jurisprudence and science. Some of the items in the collection are described below.

Pottery and Ceramics

Items of pottery and ceramics in the Kanoo Collection present a wide historic band spanning the progress of the art from the early unglazed ware of the 9th and 10th centuries AD. from Iraq, Syria and Iran to the later coloured ware from Iznik and Kutahyah from Ottoman Turkey. Significant Islamic contributions in the arts of glazing and colouring are well covered in the collection. Slipware from Nishapur, famous Islamic lustre and Min'ai ware from 13/14th C. Kashan in Iran, excellent examples of Mamluk ware from Syria and later superb Iranian examples of Safavid and Qajar pottery and ceramics are all well presented.

Glass

The Kanoo collection is rich in a great variety of artefacts in Islamic glass, most of which outline the development of glass-making in the Islamic world from around the 9th and 10th centuries AD to the late 18th century. Many of the examples in the collection show important construction and decorative methods employed or developed by Islamic glassmakers such as free and mould-blowing, drawn, cut and carved glass techniques, tinting, colouring and enamelling The collection includes a variety of items such as beakers, bowls rose-water sprinklers and containers large and small and bottles in a variety of shapes and sizes from different areas of the Islamic world illustrating the richness and variety of Islamic glassware from these regions.

Metalwork

Significant examples of Islamic metalwork are presented in the Kanoo collection. These include pieces of arms and armour and fine scientific instruments. There is a variety of items from the Eastern regions of the Islamic world, Afghanistan and Iran and these illustrate the development of Islamic metalwork, alloy development and decorative styles from around the 11th century AD or earlier until well into the 19th. century. Various composition and design techniques such as decorative incising and engraving, strap and open-work and the use of inlay in copper and silver and damascening are well covered: Decorative motifs such as early abstract incised patterns, vegetal and figural designs, arabesque and the later use of calligraphy on metal work from 14th and 15th century Fars in Iran and Damascus in Syria are all well presented. The collection also has a significant number of fine examples of Mamluk metalwork from Syria and other artefacts from Ottoman Turkey, the Mahgrib, Moghul India and Qajar, Iran, including some fine pieces of enamel work in gold and silver.

Books and Manuscripts

Apart from the Holy Quranic manuscripts donated to Beit Al Qur'an, Dr Kanoo still holds a rich treasure of other Islamic manuscripts on parchment and paper, illustrating the wide range of subjects covered by Islamic craftsmen and publishers in the art of bookbinding and illumination. These include manuscripts on science, medicine, nature and jurisprudence in Arabic, Persian and Turkish. There are also extremely fine examples from Turkey, Maghrib and India of that most famous of the Islamic prayer books: Dla'il Al Khairat, beautifully illuminated and showing the regional differences in the art of book illumination. Book binding is also well covered and there are fine Mamluk examples from Egypt and Syria and others from Turkey, Iran and North Africa in leather and lacquered papier mache.

Miscellaneous Islamic Arts

The Kanoo collection includes a large number of pieces in a variety of materials and media. Carved jade and rock crystal from Iran and Moghul India, jewellery from Arabia, India and North Africa, textiles from Egypt and other regions of the Islamic world give a comprehensive view of the beauty and richness of Islamic art.

Beit Al Qur'an and this important collection of Islamic art stand today as symbols of the great achievement of a single individual in Bahrain who, with great dedication and effort, has succeeded in reviving the interest of the people of the area in their heritage and has brought the joys of Islamic civilisation to people from differing backgrounds and cultures in Bahrain and the Gulf in general.

arts
& THE ISLAMIC WORLD

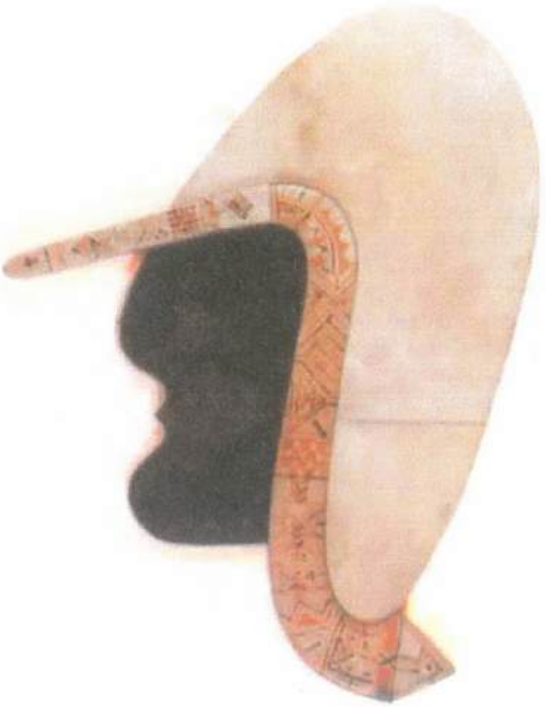
Single copy: **In UK £10** / Overseas: **US $20**
Subscription for 4 issues: (including surface postage)

Arts & The Islamic World
144-146 King's Cross Road
London WC1X 9DH
Telephone +44 171 833 8275
Facsimile +44 171 278 4797

For Institutions:
In UK **£30** / Overseas **US $60.** Airspeeded **US $75**
For Individuals:
In UK **£20** / Overseas **US $40.** Airspeeded **US $55**
All rates include surface postage. Air surcharge extra


AYEFODO


DAMIMI



Africa 95: Three Artists at the Tate, Liverpool

JUDITH NESBITT



Touhami Ennadre. *The Hands, The Back, The Feet* (detail – part of triptych) 1978-82. 180 x 120cm.

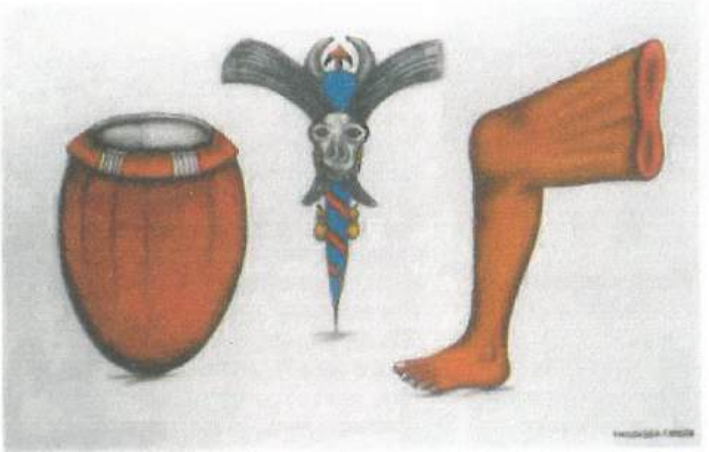
Vital, Tate Gallery Liverpool's contribution to the Africa 95 season, brought together the work of three artists: Farid Belkahia, Cyprien Tokoudagba and Touahami Ennadre. Although their work is informed by differing cultural traditions, each has evolved a highly original visual language, which speaks not to the past, but to the present, and the future. The artists also share a common interest in voodoo (its rituals and religious significance) as an expression of the human spirit.

In 1994, Tate Gallery Liverpool was the only UK venue for the exhibition *Africa Explores, Twentieth Century African Art*, organised by the Museum for African Art, New York. Following this ambitious survey, we then wanted to make a more closely focused exhibition and, since *Africa Explores* showed only art from Sub-Saharan countries, we decided to look first to North Africa. The idea of showing these three artists together arose from the friendships and professional connections between the artists themselves. In their common interest in voodoo, or the state of "trance", they draw on one of the oldest and most important traditions which spans North and Sub-Saharan Africa.

Only one of the three artists has been shown in Britain before, and the indications are that with or without a "season" of African art, these artists will find a receptive audience for their work in the UK. The opportunity to reach a wide audience is important to all of them; informed by their own contemporary experience and cultural references, each artist has created a new and compelling visual language which speaks to an international audience.

Farid Belkahia lives and works in Marrakech, where he was born in 1934. He has acquired a reputation as one of Morocco's leading contemporary artists. Steeped in his country's ancient culture, he is also a determined modernist; "one can only engage with modernity if one has assimilated the old values", he says. Trained at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris 1954-59 he then lived in Prague for several years, during which time his paintings took on sombre concern with human suffering, whether the violence of the French prisons during the Algerian War of Independence or the horror of Auschwitz, which he saw in 1955. In 1962 Belkahia returned to Morocco as the first Director of the Art School in Casablanca. There he presided over a period of liberal teaching which created a revival of interest in the history of Moroccan craftsmanship, from carpet-making





Opposite page, top: Cyprien Tokoudagba. *Ayefodo* (ghost). 1994. Acrylic on canvas. 138 x 180cm. Photo Claude Postel. **Bottom left: Cyprien Tokoudagba.** *Dammi* (emblems of Tohossou, God of water) 1994. Acrylic on canvas. 140 x 210cm. Photo Claude Postel. **Bottom Right: Farid Belkahia.** *Untitled* 1986. Skin, wood & pigment. 1500 x 1200mm. Photo Richard Goulding. **Above: Farid Belkahia.** *Procession I* 1994-5. Skin, wood & pigment. 1760 x 2170mm. Photo Richard Goulding. **Left: Cyprien Tokoudagba.** *Emblems of Kpingla, king of Abomey.* 1994. Acrylic on canvas. 142 x 222cm. Photo Claude Postel.

and silver jewellery to ceramics and pottery. During this time he stopped working in oils and paper and began to work in a traditional Moroccan material, copper. His moulded copper forms allowed him, in Rajae Benchemsi's words to "break out of the traditional frame of the rectangle and square, propelling into space strange and dynamic forms from which the body thrusts forward, charged with an amorous tension that one imagines is the legacy of the painter".

For thirty years now, Belkahia has used sheepskin instead of canvas, and natural pigments such as henna, cobalt, saffron and pomegranate bark instead of oils. The skin is stretched tight as a drum, on which are inscribed rhythmic marks, symbolic signs and characters drawn from the Berber alphabet. His paintings evoke the traditional arts of tattooing and parchment-making, but assert their vital, contemporary presence upon the viewer.

Touhami Ennadre grew up in the medina of Casablanca but moved to Paris with his family, at the age of seven. His photographs are the product of a peripatetic existence, induced perhaps by the abrupt transition from life in the medina to the suburbs of Paris. "Light is what is really real", he says, "light is the only thing which obsesses me". Self taught, he maintains that he is not a photographer. "Technique is not important, it is at most a means" – a means of bringing to light a vision of the world which does not avert its eyes from the common truths of the human experience, tracking our journey from the womb to the grave.



Touhami Ennadre. *The Hands, The Back, The Feet* (detail - part of triptych) 1978-82. 180 × 120cm

Taking his images at close range with a hand-held Hasselblad camera, Ennadre establishes an intimate relation with his subject. Dispensing with the view-finder, and therefore with the safe distance between photographer and subject, Ennadre prefers to work in an intuitive way, in physical proximity to his subject. His camera rigged with two electric torches, he shoots his photographs using his own light. The negative is only the raw material for the image which he then produces. He rigorously selects only a small number of images for the time-consuming and creative task of obliterating and "sculpting" the image in light and shadow. "I'm a painter in black" says Ennadre of his art.

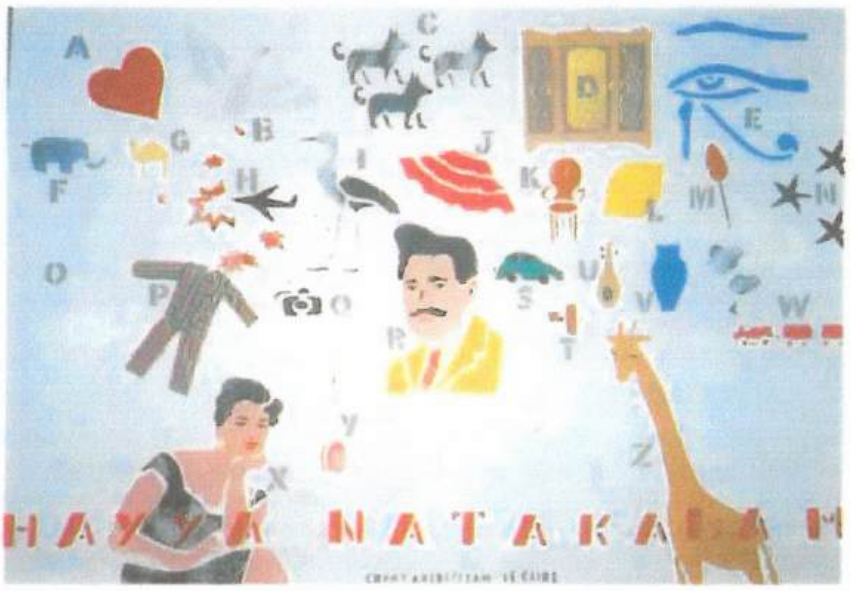
Cyprien Tokoudagba was born in 1939 into a family of distinguished warriors and prime ministers. He began by modelling in clay, terracotta, cement and sand, and continues to produce sculpture. In 1987 he was employed as a restorer by the museum in Abomey, for which he has painted a series of frescoes of the kings of Abomey, and a large sculpture on the tomb of King Guèzo. In 1989 he left Benin for the first time to participate in the Paris exhibition, *Les Magiciens de la Terre*, where his work found a wide and admiring audience. Tokoudagba's work draws upon the social and religious traditions of contemporary Benin, in particular the royal city of Abomey where he has been initiated into the religious rites of "Voudoun". "Each family of Voudoun worshippers adores one or several gods. Indeed, in the days of slavery everybody took their own *Voudouns* away with them when they left, that's all they had to hang on to", he says. The emblems of these gods of water, sky, nature, earth, iron and the snake god, which decorate the Voudoun temples, are incorporated into Tokoudagba's highly coloured acrylic paintings, strangely floated onto a monochrome white canvas.

"Art is something I have inside me", Tokoudagba maintains. "Art is the manifestation of thought and intelligence. It is an eminence, a philosopher's castle. The most appropriate word for art we have in my culture is *Alannouson*, which means craftsmanship. That means knowledge of the work of the hand. But the hand includes everything. The hand does not work on its own, it is guided by the brain and the heart". This conviction is amply demonstrated in the work of these three artists.









Above: Khaled Ben Slimane. **Right**: all three by Avedissian. **Opposite page**: Khaled Ben Slimane

Recent Exhibitions at Leighton House

JULIA FINDLATER

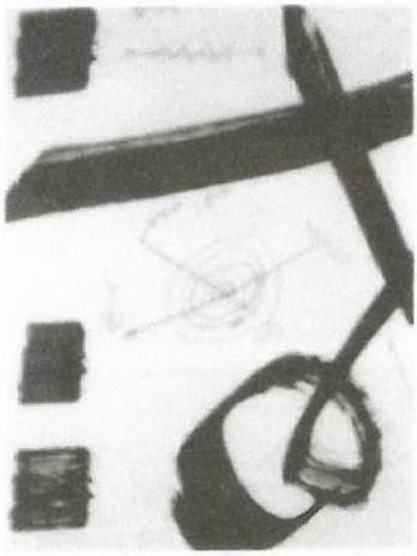
1995 has been an exciting year for the exhibition programme at Leighton House. The culmination of a number of factors has ensured that it has reached new heights, new audiences and greater attention.

There are many reasons for this. Firstly, and one of the most important, was the receipt of generous grant aid from The London Arts Board who acknowledge the importance of promoting the arts in museums, or in this case historic houses, rather than usual gallery spaces.

The grant aid has enabled the contemporary exhibition programme to develop and explore new directions. It has always been our policy to show the work of artists living and working today. This enables us to energise, what could otherwise be just another historic house, ossified in time, and gives repeat visitors to Leighton House something different to see each time they come to the house.

It might seem a curious step for Leighton House to move towards the arts of North Africa and the Middle East, but it is wholly appropriate. Leighton House, was the home of Lord Leighton, (1830-1896) painter, and President of the Royal Academy. Leighton travelled widely throughout North Africa and the Middle East and the pleasure he took from the arts of this part of the world is reflected in the Arab Hall which housed his collection of tiles, glass, woodwork and ceramics. Many visitors to Leighton House come specially to view the Arab Hall because of their interest in the arts of North Africa and the Middle East. It is appropriate, therefore, to develop the interest of those visitors by showcasing the work of artists from these countries.

Secondly, Leighton House is involved with the countrywide celebrations of "Africa 95", a season celebrating the arts of Africa. The two exhibitions: **Icons of the Nile**, Chant Avedissian, one of Egypt's foremost artists, and **Bakou,** works by Abderrazak Sahli from Tunisia,



Khaled Ben Slimane

reinforces Leighton House's position as an important venue for such work and focus much needed attention on the excellent work of artists from North Africa and the Middle East.

Thirdly, and by no means finally, it should be noted that none of these exhibitions would be possible without the expertise and collaboration of Rose Issa, freelance curator. Her tireless energy against all odds have made the impossible, possible.

I will look in more detail at the work of Chant Avidissian and Abderrazak Sahli later, but first. I would like to look at an exhibition of a ceramicist, Khalid bin Slimane whose paintings and ceramics were on show from 27th June - 8th July 1995.

Earlier in the year we featured the work of Khairat Al Saleh whose extraordinary ceramics combined influences from her own country with her fascination with the work of the British art potters of late 19th century and in particular William de Morgan whose work can be seen at Leighton House. Ben Slimane's work contrasted well with the Khairat's work taking us to the heart of traditional Tunisian ceramics.

Khalid Ben Slimane was born in 1951 in Nabeul, Tunisia, an area noted for its ceramics. He studied at the Institute of Technological Architecture, Art and Urbanism which was followed by periods of study in Spain and Japan.

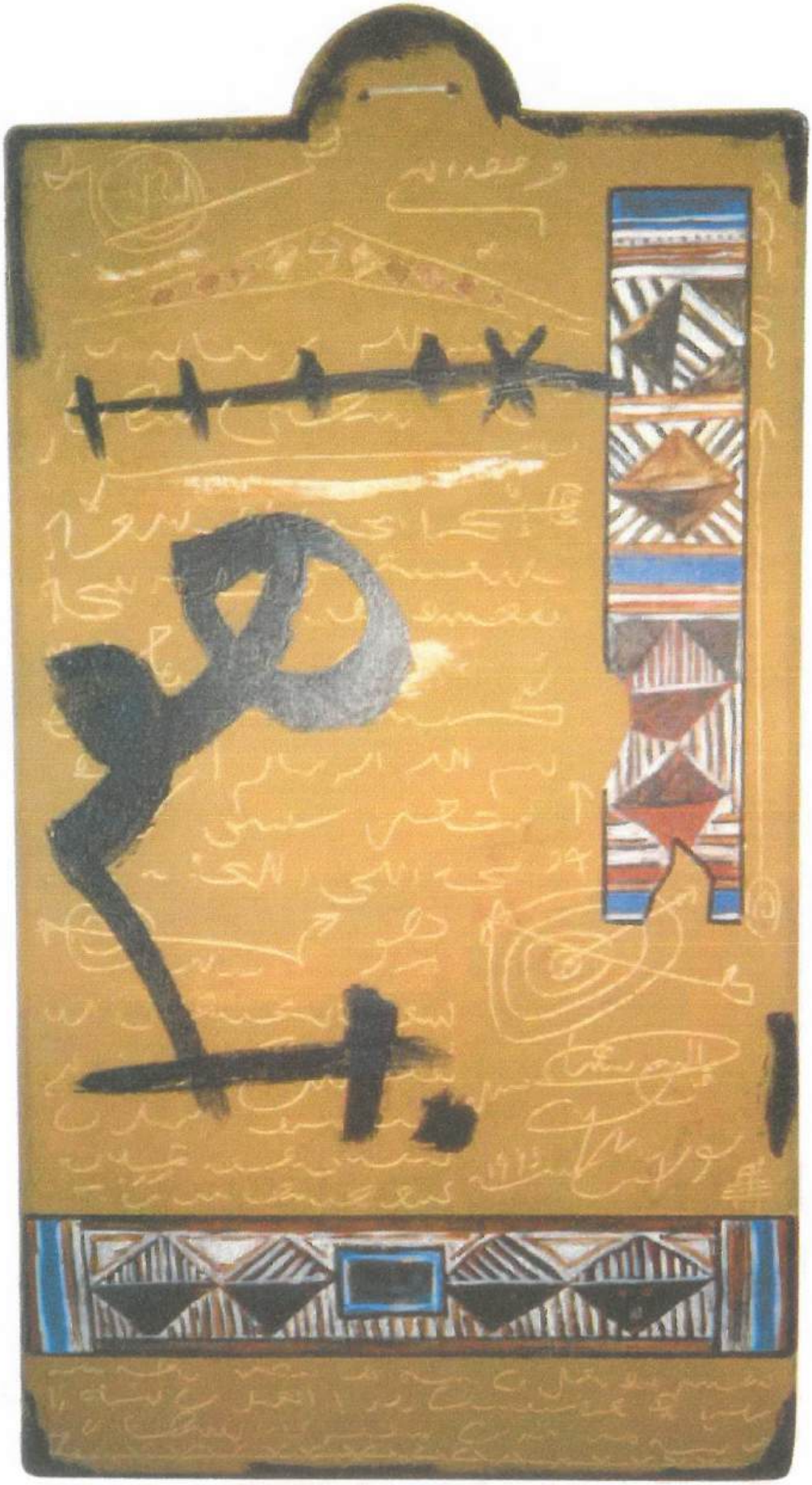
The influence of Spain and Japan combined with the long tradition of Tunisian ceramicists is blended in his work in a very subtle way. The delicate brush work found in Japanese ceramics is combined with the strong palette of colour of Spanish ceramics to create a movement and energy that rushes across the surface of his work with a joyous energy. The geometric motifs of lozenges, triangles, circles and crosses are found again and again in the traditional patterns of Tunisian design.

Ben Slimane admits to being fascinated by the shape and form of old manuscripts and he takes graphic configuration as a starting point for an exploration of a strictly two dimensional expression on a three dimensional object. Whether those objects are huge cylindrical columns, funeral stele or the domestic cups and bowls of everyday life, Ben Slimane endows them with a symbolic energy and rhythm through its extracted graphic calligraphy which decorates the surface of these objects.

To quote the catalogue which accompanied the exhibition, "This is how he manages to add a bit of poetry to the prose of life of everyday objects".

Chant Avidissian's work, Icons of the Nile, is one of the most exciting exhibitions Leighton House has ever hosted – a series of monotypes looking at the iconography of Egypt – images of the past and present as selected by the artist.

Motivated by the beginning of the Gulf War in 1991, and a growing sense of isolation generated by the media coverage of the war, Avedissian embarked on a project recalling images from his past. These included people, buildings, animals, day to day objects such as fruit or cigarettes. The



outcome is a wonderful and colourful mosaic of images reflecting the political, social, artistic and domestic world of Egypt and particularly Cairo, as experienced by Avidissian.

The work recalls film billboards where larger than life figures peer down at you. Subjects include movie stars and singers such as, Samia Gamal, Asmahan, Om Kalthoum and Hind Rustum; and political figures such as, King Farouq and Nasser. Woven between these figures are images of street scenes, the inside of 1950's cars, the detail of street furniture; pylons and wires, a bowl of fruit and animals all depicted in a witty and amusing way.

The work immediately recalls the pop images of the 1960s and 70s, the billboards and film posters of the 1950s, but these works are not ephemeral for they have a resonance and comment on the political and social history of Egypt, making them enduring and powerful.

By using recycled paper in long scroll-like forms, for the larger paintings, Avedissian recalls traditional approaches but also the transitory nature of modern advertising. The use of stencil creates an effect akin to modern posters where lines are reduced to their most simple and colours are used in strong saturated blocks to demand attention from the viewer as they rush through the city.

Avedissian was born in Cairo in 1951 of Armenian descent and it is interesting to reflect whether this background, being an insider – neither a Muslim nor of Arab descent – accounts for his ability to set himself apart, allowing him to comment on Egyptian culture.

Avedissian is also known as a textile designer. Indeed his textiles were on view at the Barbican Art Gallery's show, The Art of African Textiles. His work in the theatre and film industry culminated in an exhibition in Paris at the Arab World Institute.

We are pleased that this exhibition will be touring to other venues in Amsterdam, Holland and France.

The second exhibition in the Africa 95 season was by Abderrazak Sahli, who has had a long and extensive career and is one of Tunisia's most avant-garde artists. His work has been shown in France, Italy and Germany. The exhibition at Leighton House will be his first London show. His work is in both public and private collections around the world. Sahli has worked in many media from photography to installations. The work selected for this show was his most recent, produced in Tunisia and ranged from large canvases to small "bags".



The exhibition was called Bakou. Bakou is the Tunisian dialect word for the brown paper bags used to sell dry goods in Tunisia and in particular in Hammamet, where Sahli lives.

Sahli gives new meaning to these ubiquitous and utilitarian objects which would not normally be given a second glance. Decorated with the images of his own environment – dogs, fish, leaves, palm trees, lightening, cars and human figures – each of these "bags" reflect the day to day domestic life. The figures are broken up or abstracted so they fit together in a geometric mosaic which dances across the surface suggesting the movement of the objects captured on the surface of his work. Sahli has abstracted these everyday figures to create a language which conveys his own feelings about his environment, but unlike many artists, this is a language that the viewer can understand and share in.

The larger paintings were particularly energetic with figures swarming across the canvas reflecting the colour, light and energy of everyday life as lived in the sea-side town of Hammamet.

This tapestry of life, created in two dimensions in his work, is reflected in the floors and interior decoration of Tunisian homes where broken tiles are used to decorate the surfaces of houses both inside and outside.



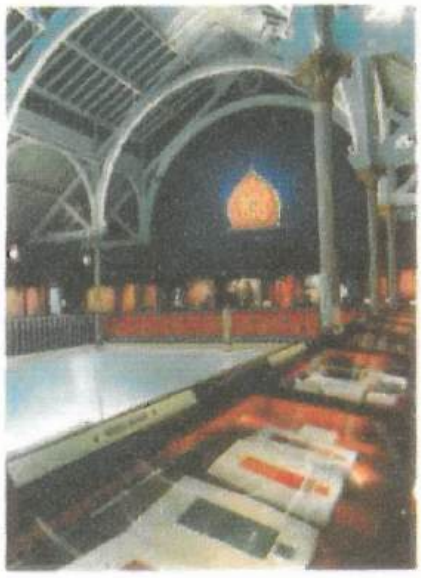
Top and above: Khaled Ben Slimane

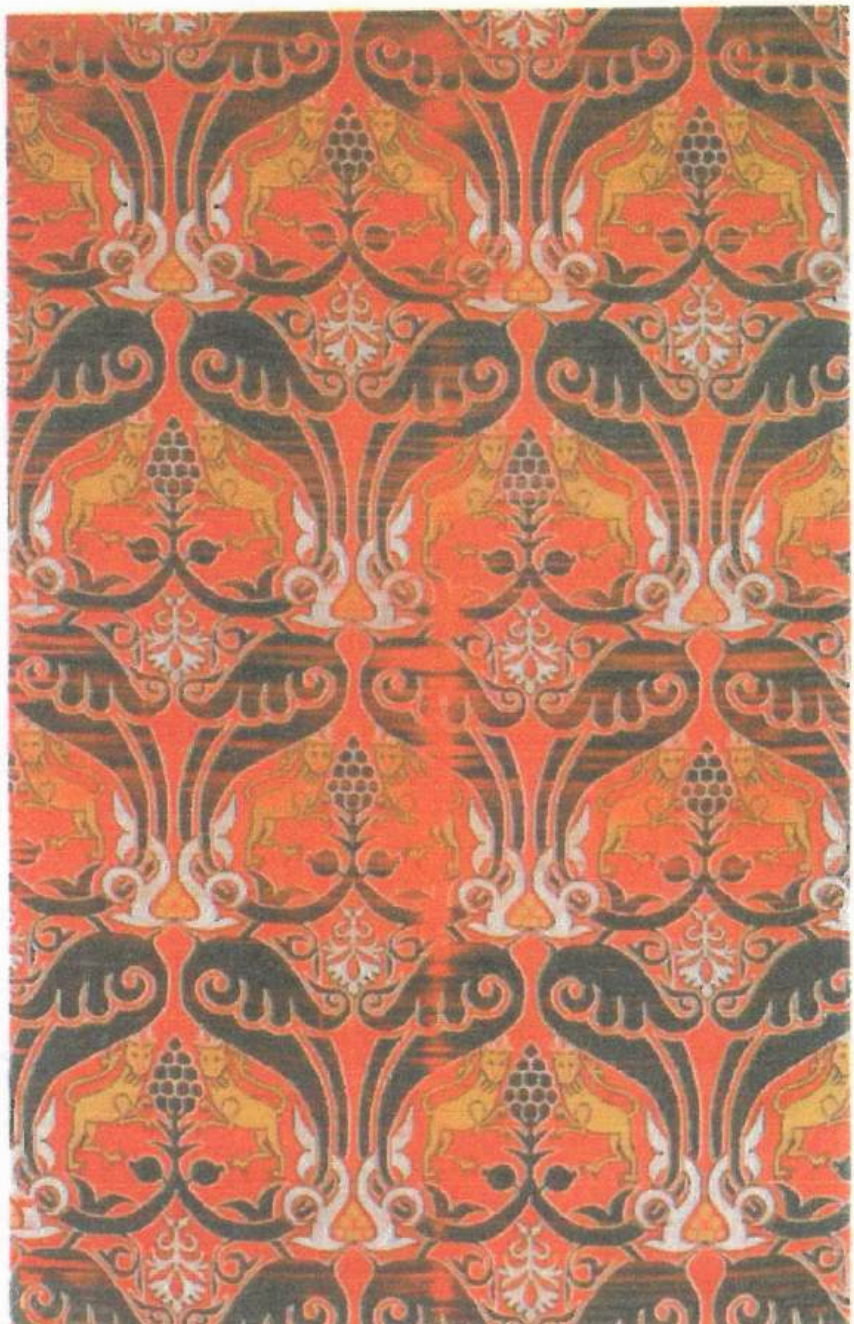
All three of these exhibitions have been well received, both individual and as part of the Africa 95 season. It was particularly important that Leighton House took part in the Africa 95 season to ensure a fair balance in the coverage of work of this enormous continent.

Plans for other exhibitions include work by Suad Al Attar whose exhibition in 1993 was extremely successful, and Fadwa Bizzari who, inspired by her Middle Eastern roots and upbringing, creates colourful and energetic canvases depicting the folklore and day to day life of that area.

Leighton House Museum, 12 Holland Park Road, London W14 8LZ, is open, 11am-5.30pm, Mon-Sat. Closed Sundays and Bank Holidays. Telephone 0171 602 3316







Above: Detail.Textile. Woven silk textile with pairs of lions running among foliage. Spain, Andalucia. 1480-1500 AD. **Above:** Detail.Textile. Woven silk textile with pairs of lions running among foliage. Spain, Andalucia. 1480-1500 AD. **Above:** Detail.Textile. Woven silk textile with pairs of lions running among foliage. Spain, Andalucia. 1480-1500 AD. **Opposite page:** Miniature painting celebrating the birth of a child in opaque mineral colours. Indian Deccan. 17th century AD.

Arabic inscriptions among foliage in bright turquoise and blue mingled with golden brown lustre, and a large panel of 17th century boldly patterned with flowering trees and medallions, probably from Hasht Behasht palace of Isfahan. The woodwork features two finely carved door panels inlaid with radiating geometrical designs in ivory from 14th century Cairo. The next phase of the Middle Eastern display which can be seen on the second floor balcony is a classic presentation of ceramics and metalwork in terms of technique and decoration. Ceramics and tiles from Iran, Egypt, Turkey and Morocco of 9th to 20th century illustrate the development of lustrous glazes, colour schemes dominated by blue, turquoise and golden lustre and a sophisticated iconography based on Arabic calligraphy, graceful scrolling foliage, animal and bird motifs and pictorial themes. Interpretations here range from bold incised treatments of animals, such as lions in Iranian pottery of the 12th to 15th centuries to the luxuriant sprays of carnations, tulips and hyacinths which adorn the highly glazed polychrome wares of 16th century Turkey. Metalwork is represented by objects of everyday use and the more specialised products of the armourer's craft. Fine examples here are Iranian

Within the Middle East: Textiles, Dress and Ornament

JENNIFER SCARCE

Within the Middle East, a new permanent exhibition in the Royal Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, invites the visitor to enter a world whose cultures are visually interpreted through an art dominated by brilliant colours and rich textures. The material on display is drawn from the Museum's excellent Middle East collections which reflect both the energy and curiosity of resourceful Scots and the appetite for education in the broadest sense which characterised Victorian Britain.

Here the Museum has played a distinguished role in the cultural history of both Edinburgh and Britain. The Great Exhibition held at the Crystal Palace in London in 1851 generated through its spectacular displays of international products, design and industry an enthusiasm for all forms of art, science and technology which found permanent expression in the many museums and galleries established in Britain during the late 19th century. The Royal Museum of Scotland was charged with the ambitious aim of encouraging research and educating the public through comprehensive collections which represented the disciplines of archaeology, ethnography, history and applied art, natural history, geology and technology.

The Museum is situated in the centre of Edinburgh close to the Castle and the picturesque buildings of the Old Town. It is housed in one of the finest Victorian public buildings in Britain and as such is listed as a national treasure of architecture. It was designed by Captain Francis Fowke RE (1823-1865) who employed the new building materials of cast iron and plate glass which had been pioneered in the Crystal Palace. Work began on the Museum in 1861 when Albert the Prince Consort laid the foundation stone and continued until 1888. The architecture successfully blends tradition and technical experiment. Within the handsome sandstone facade built in a style inspired by the Italian Renaissance, the Great Hall dominates the Museum. Here Captain Fowke created a light spacious interior of rounded arches and slender columns ascending to a graceful vaulted roof.

The Great Hall now concentrates on permanent exhibitions of applied art from the cultures of Europe, the Middle East and the Far East. Special features such as a lofty central space encircled by two tiers of balconies which in turn open into galleries of colonnades enclosing open vestibules, create an architectural environment sympathetic to the display of the Middle East collections.

Since its foundation the Royal Museum of Scotland had a responsibility as a national museum to collect and display material in a way which demonstrates the vitality of intercultural relationships. Here the influence of the Middle East, a region where Islam is the principal religion, is seen in the disciplined exuberance of the decoration of the ceramics, tiles, woven and embroidered textiles and carpets which so delighted the Victorians. It was therefore natural for the Museum to collect Islamic art. The collections which began modestly enough in 1858 with the acquisition of some dress and jewellery from Egypt, now number about 5000 objects. They developed rapidly during the Directorship of Major General Sir Robert Murdoch Smith KCMG (1835-1900) who retired to his native Scotland after an active career as Director of the Persian Telegraph Services (1865-1888) and pioneer scholar of Iranian art. During his years at the Royal Museum of Scotland from 1885 until his death in 1900 his most enduring achievement was the expansion of the collections of Iranian art. Through his expert knowledge and contacts fine material, notably of the 17th to 18th centuries, was acquired. He was also sufficiently far sighted to encourage the acquisition of contemporary objects which could be accurately documented. Here he managed to persuade a tile maker Ali Mohammad Isfahani to write an account of his craft, which is one of the few sources available for the study of the subject.

From this secure foundation the collections have steadily increased through donations and bequests often from expatriate Scots, fieldwork and purchase. They now consist of ceramics, tiles and glass, metalwork, arms and armour, paintings and lacquer, textiles, carpets, dress, jewellery and coins ranging in date from the 9th to 20th centuries. They cover an impressive geographical area – Arabia including Kuwait and Oman, Egypt, North Africa, Syria, Turkey, Iran, Central Asia, India and Indonesia.

One of the highlights of Sir Robert Murdoch Smith's Directorship was the reception held in the Great Hall on 23rd July 1889 for Nasiruddin Shah of Iran during his third visit to Europe. It is therefore entirely appropriate that the Middle Eastern displays are concentrated around this area. Middle Eastern art has immediately distinctive features influenced by the traditions of the lands conquered by the Muslim Arabs during the 7th and 8th centuries. Here the naturalistic foliage and vine scrolls of the Graeco-Roman art of the Eastern Mediterranean blended with the stylised tree and flower motifs of the ancient cultures of Iran and Iraq to form a richly textured and versatile art. The main elements are based on calligraphy, geometric and plant motifs. Arabic, respected as the language of the Qur'an, is written in many styles of script both angular and cursive. Interlocking geometric motifs are repeated infinitely over an extended surface. The plant motifs evolved into the arabesque - a scroll of stems, leaves and tendrils trained and interlaced into bands, panels and medallions. The Museum has aimed to both present a balanced view of Middle Eastern art and culture and to indicate its rich variations through three ascending phases of display.

The ground floor of the Great Hall is reserved for large architectural pieces of Iranian glazed tilework and Egyptian carved wood. Tiles include prayer niches and tombstones of 13th to 14th century decorated with



candlesticks and boxes of 14th century date made of brass and bronze decorated with inscriptions, figure scenes and geometric interlace finely engraved and highlighted with gold and silver inlay. A damascened steel Iranian cuirass inlaid in gold with talismanic inscriptions and a date corresponding to 1703 AD is a rare surviving piece of armour.

Within the Middle East, which concentrates on textiles, dress and related ornaments, is the third and most recent phase of display which opened to the public on 12th May 1995. It is located in one of the original 19th century galleries on the floor of the Museum close to the ceramics and metalwork already on exhibition. Its completion now gives the visitor access to a comprehensive presentation of Middle Eastern art and culture unparalleled in Scotland. The new gallery has provided an opportunity to interpret sensitive material in a fresh and imaginative way which makes positive use of the dramatic vaulted arches and colonnades of the Victorian structure. As the display concentrates on textiles the concept of their basic role in a Middle Eastern interior was chosen as a means of linking material from areas such as Turkey and Iran. The distinctive features of the domestic interior are textiles which provided household furnishing and clothing, functioned as symbols of power and social status and played a vital economic role in industry and trade. The delight in brilliant colour and the imaginative treatments of surface and texture are striking and also influenced architectural decoration, manuscript illumination and the ornament of ceramics, metalwork, leather and wood.

The role of textiles in furnishing is illustrated by a series of woven and embroidered silks, velvets, block-printed cottons, and knotted silk and wool pile carpets from Turkey, Iran, Syria and India dating from the 15th to 20th centuries, all displayed in vertical wall cases. Textiles in a Middle Eastern interior offered many opportunities for flexible and imaginative furnishing schemes. Many types of hanging, such as the velvets of 17th century Turkey and the embroidered wools of 19th century Iran, draped walls or curtained doors and enclosed secluded areas.

Rich textiles transformed spaces for ceremonies and receptions. Cushions were placed in rows along walls or grouped around window niches to form seating units. Covers were possibly the most flexible unit of textile furnishing. Rich covers of embroidered and quilted silks and velvets identified seating areas for important guests. Food was served on covers spread over the floor. Mattresses and cushions which functioned as bedding were concealed beneath covers, while clothing was wrapped in bundles which could be stored in chests or deep wall niches. Carpets with soft pile knotted in wool and silk using an infinite range of luxuriant designs covered the bare floors of public buildings such as mosques and of private dwellings according to means and taste.

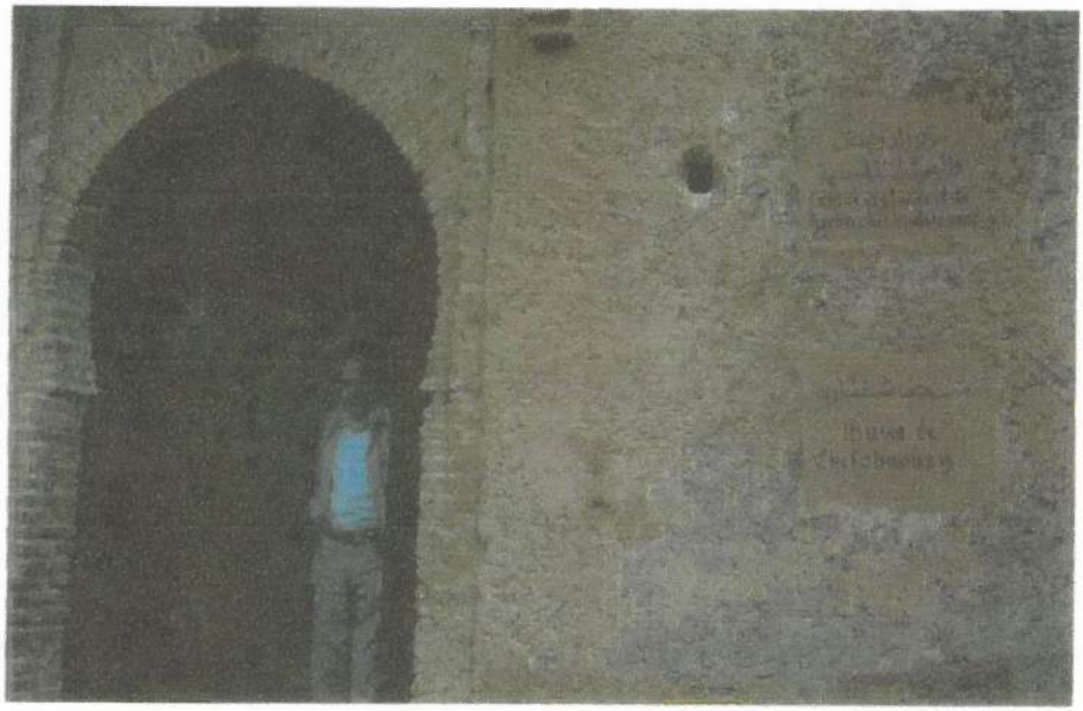
A tableau of fully costumed figures brings to life the sumptuous dress traditions of the Ottoman Empire and Central Asia during the 19th century. This both displays the garments to full advantage and also provides a three-dimensional focus to the gallery. Dress is one of the most powerful visual symbols of a person's status in both the public world and the private domain where it indicated occupation, rank and nationality. The tableau explores some of these themes through an imaginative glimpse into an affluent Ottoman household where the costumes are displayed in a setting based on contemporary written and pictorial sources. The costumes of two handsomely dressed male figures placed in an area corresponding to the public reception room immediately identify their status. Albanians found employment in the Ottoman Empire at various levels. The figure here representing a servant guarding a wealthy household wears his distinctive national dress of a full skirt and embroidered jacket as an occupational uniform. Similarly the heavy purple velvet coat encrusted with foliage embroidered in silver and gold thread of a court official visiting from Bokhara leaves no doubt concerning his nationality and rank.

Separated from the public area by a pierced wooden screen are three female figures. Two of them are strikingly dressed in layers of graceful trailing garments worked in gold embroidered lime green and deep coral pink silks. They also show the influence of Europe in such accessories as lace caps and collars and shoes with high heels. Such costumes indicated the wealth and status of upper class Ottoman women. Here Istanbul set the standards for luxurious city fashions throughout the provinces such as Egypt, and the Balkan lands. A third figure wears the voluminous trousers and jacket both of embroidered purple velvet typical of the more conservative fashions of affluent middle class women from the provinces of central Anatolia. All the female figures are grouped naturally in a room setting featuring a set of a silver jewellery box and ornaments against a background of embroidered Turkish napkins hung to display the high standard of domestic needlework. The dress tableau is flanked by wall cases containing lengths mainly of Turkish silk and velvet of 16th to 17th century date to illustrate garment design and construction. These heavy fabrics were woven in narrow widths which were then made up into garments sewn together from simply cut pattern pieces which relied on colour and design motif for impact.

A display of small objects in flat desk cases takes up themes of textile production and design and the role of personal possessions within an interior. Pattern books and blocks from Iran and India and tools from Turkey help to explain the processes of printing and carpet weaving. Ceramic sherds from medieval Cairo illustrate the influence of textile design in their decoration of repeated and interlaced motifs worked in combinations of cut and moulded techniques and brilliantly coloured glazes. Mirror and comb cases, trays and jewellery caskets worked in delicately painted papier mache or in wood inlaid with ivory and iridescent shell feature continuous flower scrolls and repeated geometrical motifs which would be equally suitable for lengths of fabric. Personal possessions such as copies of the Qur'an and identity documents were protected with specially designed envelopes and covers worked in embroidery on leather and velvet. Notable here are two wallets to contain the diplomatic and commercial passports of Europeans working in Istanbul. They are of dark green and red leather embroidered with the owner's names and the dates 1697AD and 1784AD respectively. A display of calligraphy and manuscript illustration from Turkey, Iran and India illustrate the spirited detail and vibrant colour of

continued on page 146

Right: Chefchaouen Ethnographic Museum. **Opposite page, top:** Majorelle Museum, Marrakesh. **Below, left to right:** 1. The Dar Batha Museum, Larache. 2. The National Museum of Ceramics, Safi. 3. The Dar Jamai Museum, Meknes. Photographs by Carol H Mail.



publishing giant Malcolm Forbes (d 1990), it is open daily except Thursdays and is free. It contains the largest collection of toy soldiers in the world: some 115,000 lead pieces and it displays major military battles including two from Morocco: the (1578) battle of the Three Kings at Kaar El Kabir (depicting with over 600 pieces the battle in which all the Portuguese nobility were killed or captured) and the 1975 Marche Verte, when 350,000 unarmed Moroccans, led by King Hassan, marched on Spanish Sahara. Also on view are the battles of Waterloo, Dien Bien Phu and the Somme. In addition there are posters of war and wartime propaganda on exhibit.

TETOUAN

The Ethnographic Museum

This Museum of Moroccan Arts, founded in 1948, is located in the former fortress of the Sultan Moulay Abderrahman. The textiles and costume collections are exhibited in several rooms which contain trousseaus for marriage ceremonies, and in the upstairs rooms are fine examples of Islamic embroidery. On the first floor is a display representative of the daily life of a villager and contains a traditional man's loom. Other small galleries exhibit ornate saddles, arms and enamelled tiles. Tetouan has a distinctive tradition of making wall tiles, or *zellig*, which differs from other pottery centres in Morocco. Here the wet clay is cut to shape, then fired and glazed before it is mortared into a larger pattern. In other ceramic centres the tiles are cut after being fired.

CHEFCHAOUEN

The Ethnographic (folk) Museum

The Museum is located in the old apartments of the Kasbah begun by Pasha Ahmed Errifi in the 15th century and restored later by Sultan Moulay Ismail. The small collection features embroidery, ceramics, wooden caskets, arms and musical instruments from Northern Morocco. Wall-mounted photographs record the lifestyles of the peoples and enhance the exhibits. The garden outside its door leads to a tunnel and a small prison, both with fascinating histories.

LARACHE

Archaeological Museum

Formerly the palace of Sultan Youssef Abdelhak el Merini from 1258-1281, the Archaeological Museum was also formerly a fort and is decorated with the arms of the Spanish King Charles V. The museum is free and contains both copies of artefacts from Lixus and original material. The geometric mosaics are of interest as are the collections of ancient Roman coins, musical instruments, jewellery and perfume bottles.

The Dar-Batha Museum

This museum of Moroccan Arts and Crafts contains excellent examples of the blue and white geometrically decorated pottery famous to Fez. Their ceramic collection ranges in date from the 16th century to the 1930's. The palace of Dar Batha was begun by Moulay Hassan (1873-94) and finished by his son Abdul Aziz (1894-1908).

The exhibits are extensive, further confirming the importance of the Imperial City of Fez as an historical cultural and creative centre. Several of the outer galleries features carved cedar wood architectural remnants, some from the Misbahiya medersa, and carved plaster friezes from Saadian (1554-1668) or Merenid (1248-1554) dynasties. The collections also include Berber jewellery, illustrated Qur'ans, calligraphy, stamps and coins, weavings, embroidery, metalwares, astrolabes and a magnificent room of Middle Atlas carpets. Outside, a garden of tall shade trees and bamboo is the site of concerts.

The Borj-Nord Museum

This former Saadian fortress became the Museum of Arms in 1964. As you enter, there is a small collection of prehistoric Stone Age and Bronze Age weapons. The Museum is most

Museums in Morocco

CAROL H MALT

Morocco is a large country with areas of vastly different topography, history, climate and artistic traditions, but the tradition of honouring and collecting the past, of pride in artistic production and of wanting to share this pride is common throughout. Moroccan museums are performing an important and necessary role in honouring this heritage by collecting, preserving, interpreting, and by providing professional services and information to residents and visitors.

Many of the museums I visited and describe in this article are government supported and because of this there are many common issues of operation such as hours and fees. Most Moroccan museums are closed on Tuesdays. Also, most museums are open between 9am and noon, then from 3pm to 6pm and charge a small admission fee. They usually prohibit photography and many maintain distinctive gardens. I will identify those which differ.

The majority of Moroccan museums exhibit the antiquities, ethnographic art and the indigenous crafts of the country and there are few museums - or even galleries - which show contemporary painting and sculpture on a regular basis except for those in Tangier and Casablanca.

The labels describing museum exhibits are in Arabic and most often have French translations, but extensive didactic wall information is seldom provided. It is unusual to find exhibit information in English.

Most of the major towns and cities sell contemporary arts and crafts at government run centres called the Ensemble Artisanal or Centre Artisanal and some of these also feature working studios such as in Azrou and Fez. Some of the museums provide an historic perspective of continuity and a formal setting for examples of quality production ranging from carpets, brass work, painted cages, pottery to an occasional landscape painting on canvas.

I often mention the historic buildings or sites which house museums because they are usually architecturally splendid and are themselves historic examples of the fine craft and design tradition because of the exquisite embellishment of their exteriors and interiors. In fact many an antique wall, door or tile from these old buildings are in the permanent collections of major museums.

Lastly, I want to mention that identifying and describing all of the museums in Morocco is a formidable task and deserves space and depth unavailable for this article. This article can only serve as an introduction and therefore I have limited coverage to the northern and central museums of the country and can only highlight their collections. Hopefully, information on other museums in Morocco will appear in future publications. The museums in this survey are listed geographically, going from north to south.

TANGIER

The Tangier Gallery of Contemporary Art

Tangier is Morocco's most international city. For centuries it has been a haven for international artists, designers, writers and a showcase for the contemporary fine arts. The Musee d'Art Contemporain de Tangier on Rue d'Angleterre formerly housed the British Consulate. It is the nation's first public museum, offering a rare opportunity to enjoy Moroccan art by artists who paint on canvas. The collections include works of contemporary Moroccan artists and in the six downstairs rooms, many works from Morocco's first generation of painters are on display. Some of those represented are Mohammed Hamdid, Chabia Tallal, Fatima Hassani and Ben Ali R'Bati, an early Moroccan naive painter.

The American Legation Museum

Open every day and free, this Museum is housed in a palace given to the United States government by Sultan Moulay Sliman (1792-1822) and was the first American ambassadorial residence, established in 1777. The Legation was established in 1821. On the ground floor there is an exhibit of Moroccan and American artists who have worked in Tangier. The collections also include works by James McBey, the engraver-painter who worked in Morocco. In rooms overlooking the courtyards, there are historical exhibits about the city and prints, maps and engravings of Tangier. The Legation has a reference and lending library and a research centre. For Americans it is important historically because Morocco was the first country abroad to recognise the independence of the United States. The collection also includes an 18th century letter from George Washington to Sultan Moulay Ben Abdallah.

The Dar El Makhzen

This former Sultanate Palace is a museum of both crafts and antiquities. The 17th century palace was built by Sultan Moulay Ismail (1672-1727), embellished by his successors and last used as a palace in 1912. There are two interior courtyards with fountains, columns of Roman origin, and mosaics and artefacts from Volubilis, the ancient capital of the Roman province of Mauretania Tingitania.

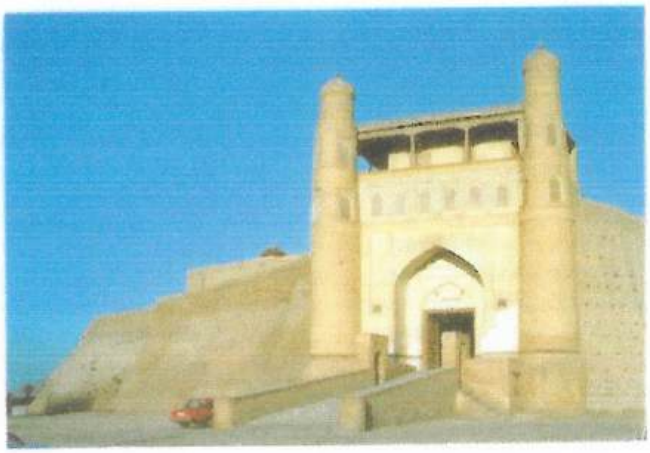
In its treasury hall, decorated strongboxes are displayed as well as the ornate bride-box sedan chairs used to carry brides to their husbands. The Museum is resplendent with tile work, plaster decoration, carved and painted doors and calligraphic friezes. Its collections feature swords, rifles, leather work, embroidery, musical instruments, metalware, carpets, illuminated Qur'ans and ceramics from the cities of Fez, Meknes and Safi.

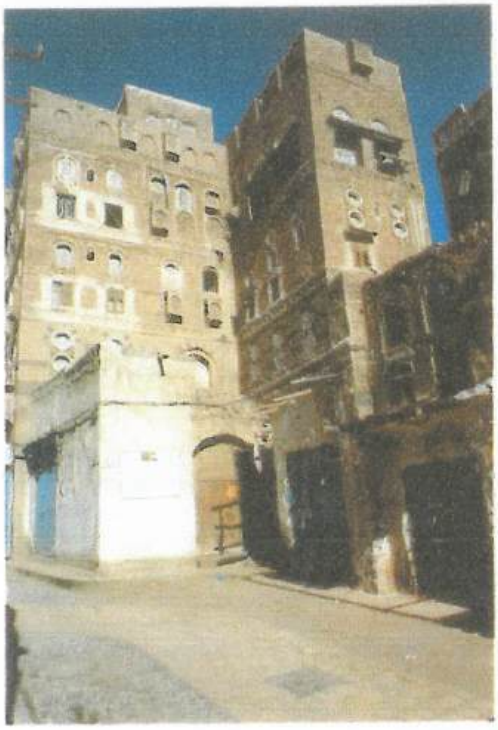
In the nearby Archaeological Museum the collections include copies of bronze sculpture from Volubilis, (the originals are in the Archaeology Museum in Rabat) and various objects from the ancient sites of Thamusida, Tamuda, Cotta, Lixus (the legendary site of the Gardens of the Hesperidas), Banasa and Sala Colonia. On the Second floor are four rooms which display pottery, flint, coins and funerary remains from prehistoric times.

The Forbes Museum

The Forbes Museum of Military Miniatures is located in the old Palais Mendoubi. Founded by American











Clockwise from above: **1. Conservation of Old Sana'a,** Sana'a, Yemen. Photographer: F. Derakhshani. **2. Grand Mosque of Riyadh and Redevelopment of the Old City Centre,** Riyadh, Saudi Arabia. Photographer: Mehmet Karakurt. **3. Restoration of Bukhara Old City,** Bukhara, Uzbekistan. Photographer: Reha Günay. **4. Reconstruction of Hafsia Quarter II,** Tunis, Tunisia. Photographer: Khadija M'hedhebi. **5. Khuda Ki Basti Incremental Development scheme,** Hyderabad, Pakistan. Photographer: Murlidhar Dawani. **6. Aranya Community Housing,** Indore, India. Photographer: John Pankar.



area in architectural discussion and judgement about contemporary buildings in the Muslim world, gives as much pause and generates as much disagreement as the cultural ambiguity of modern Muslim cityscapes. Once one has passed the symbolic gestures towards the pattern of the traditional and entered into the world of contemporary urbanism, chaos and contradiction reign. All notions of scale have been overwhelmed by the sheer necessity of rampant expansion, redevelopment, overwhelming numbers and the need to provide free and untravelled passage to the automobile - witness Cairo, Dhaka, Jakarta, Karachi, to name only a few that illustrate the dilemma. How then, in architecture does one begin to address a creative response to urbanism through models that are culturally sensitive and at the same time forward-looking? The three winners offer some answers. The *Kaedi Regional Hospital* in Mauritania is a striking example of an inventive brick-vaulted structure, enhanced by an imaginative use of local decoration. It projects a message about working within one's context without losing the capacity for original design and highlights issues in a larger debate about the role of architecture in the development process. The materials, the structures, techniques and forms compel a transformation of existing modes of thinking about architecture and its application to hospitals and analogous projects in developing countries.

A different pattern is exhibited by the *Menara Mesiniaga* tower in Kuala Lumpur, a building for IBM, that reflects its "high-tech" function. It is inspired by the architect's understanding of "bio-climatic architecture", contrasting dramatically with other high-rise structures in Kuala Lumpur, in its sensitivity to environmental concerns and to its local context. It offers the possibility that in similar, enabling economic settings that share a common climate and environmental features, architectural vision and a contemporary quality can be fruitfully synthesised to also embody ecological values.

The Great Mosque of Riyadh and *Redevelopment of the Old City Centre* in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, restore the quest for symbolism to a more familiar terrain. Here the Mosque seen together with its immediate urban context, represents an attempt to revitalise a neglected part of the old city in what is now the burgeoning, new capital dominated by steel and concrete structures. The network of buildings, squares and arcades in the complex, recreate the sense of a former, indigenous Nejdi environment. While not reflecting any significant breakthrough in terms of an architectural vocabulary addressed to the Mosque or related public spaces, it is characterised by sensitivity and quality in its blending of the traditional and the contemporary and in the option it offers of an alternative public space, in a city that far too quickly has begun to resemble the "decertification" of many of our cities.

The four projects selected under the final category: *Innovative Concepts* allow us to see how new unities might be fashioned at a time of disconnected heterogeneity. According to the Master Jury, their choices reflected the "daring to think what is unthinkable", and the ability to bring them to realisation by extending architectural language. The *Alliance Franco-Senegalaise*, a cultural complex in Kaolack, Senegal, is visually the most communicative of the projects chosen. It communicates through the use of colour, design and ornamentation, delegating in its own transformation of African decorative motifs and imagery. It is a public space in which the designer, who is a French anthropologist, has worked with Senegalese counterparts to hold up a mirror in which they could affirm the possibility of their own culture's inventiveness and be animated by an imaginative iconography. Widespread public use and acceptance of the Centre confirms its value as an architectural text that manifests a particular but critical expression of the use of ornamentation, and at the same time evokes an emotional and supportive response from the people who use it. Its media carry a message for those outside Africa who lament the erosion of vernacular culture and to those within who might have despaired about the possibilities of refiguring their world through their own artistic and architectural heritage.

The Reforestation Programme of Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey and the *Landscaping Integration of Soekarno-Hatta Airport* in Jakarta, Indonesia, are reminders of a new awareness among architects and others of the crucial importance of ecology and environmental concerns. In a world, when built-up space has encroached upon and eroded green spaces, the choice of these projects is a strong signal about the meaning of "architecture beyond architecture". If architecture can indeed be said to mediate between human beings and the natural world, they mark a return to a stronger, more self-conscious bond between the two where the immediate environment is lacking in greenery, as in Ankara's immediate environment, a wilderness can be created through planning, commitment and learning. Over time, nature has been recreated at the University to restore a balance of perspective and attitude as a reminder that we ought not too readily to give up a long-valued connection with our neighbours, who were there long before we arrived on the scene.

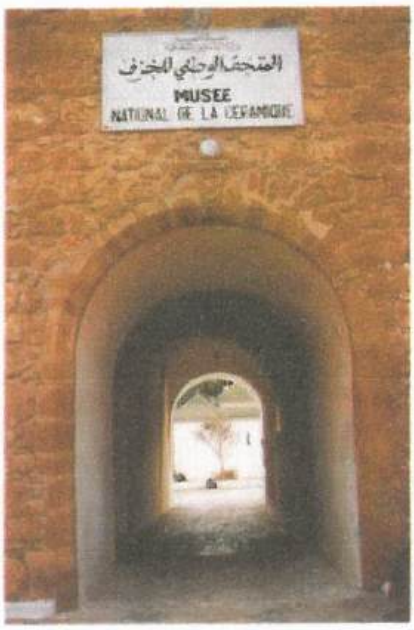
Airports are interior spaces marked by liminality: we wait there only because we wish to leave and go elsewhere. The possibility that such liminal moments can be invigorating by linking interior and exterior spaces, is what distinguishes the new Jakarta airport from many others. The designed landscaping is more than a token gesture towards nature: it integrates in an imaginative way, the rich ecological features of Indonesia, by making them part of one's temporary sojourn and transition and shows how fruitful such an achievement might be in other, more arid and alienating spaces of transition.

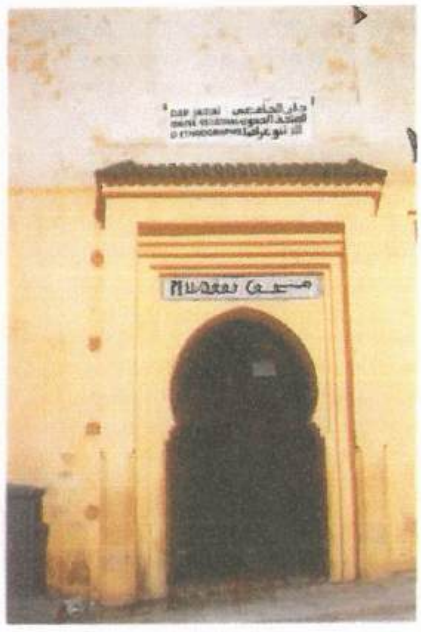
The developing of an architecture that evokes nostalgia for what might be perceived as having a resonance with the Muslim past, is best embodied in the public mind, in the appearance of a mosque.

The great leaps forward in mosque architecture in the past, from Baghdad and Damascus to Cairo, Bukhara, Delhi, Lahore to Istanbul and even in modern times in Bosnia, has been marked not by a displacement of architectural and design vocabulary but rather by a blending and an extension. They did not suppress the vision embodied in the generative ambience of former examples; on the contrary, each opened up the possibility of how long-held ritual actions and meaning are retamed within a public space marked by geometric intensity that allows an ordered body of believers a









famous, however, for its impressive exhibit of Moroccan and European weapons, many of which are the result of royal donations. The collections include swords and daggers, knives and lances, guns from the 16th to the 20th centuries from India, Europe and Asia and a sporting collection. The large collection of muskets represents confiscations from the Rif tribes during their late 1950's rebellion and the twelve ton canon was used in the Battle of the Three Kings.

Archaeological Museum
Built in 1943, the collection focuses on prehistoric tools, bronzes, pottery and material from pre-Islamic sites. Outside this small museum are mosaics from Lixus; on the grounds are amphoras, Punic stelas and grave stones. In the entrance hall you are greeted by two classical mosaics: the Three Graces and Baccus. Other objects of interest from the collection are a prehistoric rock carving of a bison from Es-Semara in the Western Sahara, an ex-voto statuette found near Asilah on the Atlantic coast and Roman Period mosaics and bronzes. Most of their figurine collection dates from the First Century AD. The upstairs galleries better define the Islamic period and feature a large map of the tribes and sites of the region.

RABAT
The Palace Museum of Oudaies
This Museum of Moroccan Arts is

continued on page 138

Coverage of Islamic Art in Reference Works

JONATHAN M BLOOM

I intend here to discuss how information about Islamic art is made available to other scholars of Islamic art, the history of art, Islamic studies, and the general public through reference works. As the discipline of art history has become more theoretical and specialised, it has become less comprehensible not only to the general public but also to scholars in other disciplines, whose interests in the history of art may range from the general to the specific. As the study of Islamic art has "matured" in recent years and become part of college and university curriculums, Islamic art has begun to be included in textbooks and encyclopaedias. Gombrich's *The Story of Art*, for example, represents the "old school", even in the 14th edition (1984), and concedes Islamic art a paragraph and a photo of the Court of Lions at the Alhambra. In contrast, Janson's *History of Art*, which made famous a calligraphic page from an album in Istanbul, gives the subject an entire chapter at the beginning of the Medieval section, along with 23 illustrations and 3 colour plates in the 3rd edition (1985). Honour and Fleming - far more progressive - give Islamic art even more extensive coverage with an entire 19-page chapter on early Islamic art and part of a later chapter on wider horizons, including the arts of the Nasrids, Mongols, Ottomans, Safavids and Mughals – along with the Maya, Aztecs, Incas, Black Africa, China and Japan! Similarly, the late Spiro Kostoff integrated Islamic architecture into chapters of his *History of Architecture* (1985), with a bit on the Mediterranean in the early Middle Ages, another bit on the North Dome at Isfahan and the Alhambra, and two other sections comparing Cairo with Florence in the 13th century and Istanbul with Venice in the 16th. For better or for worse, these chapters have introduced some of the great monuments of Islamic art and architecture to a generation of students of art history.

Students in art history courses apparently fare much better than those in courses on Islamic history, to judge from some recent books. Ira Lapidus's *History of Islamic Societies* (1988) gives short shrift to Islamic art, although it is sprinkled with about two dozen illustrations, half of which have nothing to go with art. Even worse, the late Albert Hourani's magisterial *History of the Arab Peoples* (1991) barely mentions the arts. The publisher apparently knew the book would sell better with pictures, so the historian Roy Mottahedeh was asked to choose and caption 39 photographs, only about half of which concern the visual arts. In short, it would seem that Islamic art is more important for historians of art than it is for historians of Islam. Part of the blame should be laid squarely in the laps of historians of Islamic art and architecture, for we have failed to make our information and knowledge accessible and show how it is relevant to scholars in other fields of Islamic studies.

Nevertheless, Islamic art has been integrated into general reference works, particularly encyclopaedias. One might start with the 15th (new format) edition of the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* (1974), which includes Oleg Grabar's long article on "Islamic peoples, Visual arts of", a thoughtful 25-page essay on the origin and development of Islamic art from the 7th century to the 17th that encapsulates many of the ideas elaborated in the author's *Formation of Islamic Art* (1973). Although I imagine that most *Britannica* readers looking up Islamic art would be interested in later Islamic art, the focus is clearly on architecture in the early periods in the central lands from Egypt to Iran.

Proliferating and increasingly inaccessible scholarship in all fields during the 1980's and 1990's apparently created an insatiable need for new encyclopaedias and reference works in specialised fields, and a wide range of publishers has been only too happy to try and fill this void. Thus articles on Islamic art have been integrated into specialised reference works, ranging from those on Islamic studies - on the one hand - to the history of art, architecture, and archaeology on the other. Among them – to name only a few – are the *Dictionary of the Middle Ages*, *the Encyclopaedia of Near Eastern Archaeology*, and soon the *Dictionary of Art*, but there are undoubtedly many others.

The treatment of Islamic art in these collaborative reference works differs in several significant ways from that found in surveys, although in general it parallels their attitude. Thus, Islamic art plays a lesser role in reference works dealing with Islamic history than it does in reference works dealing with art history. The second edition of *The Encyclopaedia of Islam*, the grand daddy of such works as it has been published since 1954 by E J Brill in Leiden, is typical. Although it is hailed as the major reference work on all Islamic subjects, a reader handling the volumes would never realise that the visual arts were an important component of Islamic culture. There are few illustrations and none of them is in colour. Articles on dynasties sometimes mention works of architecture and art produced under their patronage, but just as often they do not; similarly some site articles mention extant monuments, others only cite all the references to a place found in medieval texts. Although the *Encyclopaedia* gives a general impression of concentrating on the central Islamic lands, coverage is quite uneven and, for example, there is really far more about art and architecture in the Indian subcontinent and Afghanistan than in Egypt and Syria.

This problem is largely due to the lack of a coherent policy on coverage of Islamic art and the slow progress of publication, which has only reached the letter R after forty years. Whether or not to include information on the arts is left to the discretion of the individual author, and as most contributors are historians, they ignore visual evidence in favour of a written text. This is clearly shown by the absence of an art-historian or a scholar sympathetic to art-historical concerns on the present editorial board. The few synthetic overviews of Islamic art in earlier fascicles have given way to specialised articles on particular arts of, say, the Mughal and Ottoman dynasties, but these articles by specialists are aimed more

continued on page 139







Clockwise from above: 1. Karaton in Surakarta. **2.** His Highness The Aga Khan meeting with President Soeharto in Jakarta. **3.** Closing remarks by HH The Aga Khan at the AKAA Seminar. **4.** HH The Aga Khan and Princess Zahra at the AKAA ceremony. **5&6.** Music and Dance performance at the AKAA ceremony.







Architecture and the New Millennium

AZIM A NANJI

Over a period of some twenty years, the activities of the Aga Khan Awards for Architecture have tried to forge and foster a shared sense of concern about the built environment of our world - that which has been inherited and is worthy of preservation and nurturing, and that which is being created or destroyed, and constitutes the reality of lived-in space.

The 12 winners of the 1995 Award represent hopeful signs of how this pursuit for excellence continues to redefine both "place and the place of architecture" (Cynthia Davidson with Ismail Serageldin, Eds. *Architecture beyond Architecture* (1995), p 9). There are expected to be two billion more persons in the world by the year 2020. Muslims, who today constitute a fifth of the human race, inhabit for the most part the regions of the globe where the population increase is expected to have its greatest and most negative impact. In the midst of the general assumption in the social sciences and elsewhere, that the predicament resulting from dramatic change points to the necessity of radical departures and discontinuity with the past, the 6th cycle's Awards project a sense of evolution and thoughtful intervention, continuity and innovation rather than dichotomy and rupture.

The Report of the 1995 Award Master Jury, emphasises the notion of "critical" social, architectural and urbanistic discourse. This notion when applied to the winning projects, suggests a combination of issues. How can the achievements of the past be put together, combined in a way that heal the ruptures generated by rampant and thoughtless modernisation and become living tissue again, promoting a sense of community and urban vitality? The five projects listed under *Critical Social Discourse*, represent some of the answers. Of those, the first three - *The Restoration of Bukhara Old City* in Uzbekistan, the *Conservation of Old Sana'a* in Yemen and the *Reconstruction* of the Hafsia Quarter II in Tunis, provide examples of adaptive re-use in the best sense of the word. As the old order was destroyed, these settings faced a terrible dislocation, an uprooting of their place in the new urbanism which destroyed old harmonies and scales and together with them, the communities at the centre of these environments. Conservation and rehabilitation in these three cities indicate attempts to revive the historic core of cities, rejuvenate their economic base and revive community participation in their management and growth. Thus, these joint community and internationally-assisted efforts now mediate successfully between the memory of the past and contemporary national and community life, and between individuals and their environments.

A universal problem of our times, is the future of the *displaced*, those who have been forced out of place and those who, driven by need and poverty, have no place. The *Khuda-ki-Basti Incremental Housing Scheme* at Hyderabad, Pakistan, as envisioned by the initiators of the project (an NGO), seeks to provide access to land for homeless migrants, the ownership of property through regular payments and the participation and involvement of the family in the design and construction of houses. Utilities and other amenities are provided and the residents are encouraged to develop economic activities that can provide a secondary source of income. These aptly titled settlements are indeed a "God-send" and in contrast to slums elsewhere, provide a place to establish new roots for many who constitute the newly disenfranchised.

Another example in this category, the *Aranya Community Housing* project in Indore, India, creates a community that provides a sense of connection and belonging. Guided by the founding vision of Balkrishna Doshi and the Vastu-Shelpa Foundation, this scheme provides an inter-communal space that acts as an umbrella for similar and yet not identical homes, offering a hierarchy of options for each dwelling, balancing freedom with a degree of control. In some ways, the principles and levels of realisation might indeed serve as a national or even international prototype, where good, professional architecture has helped to weave a social fabric that transcends ethnic, religious and social structures.

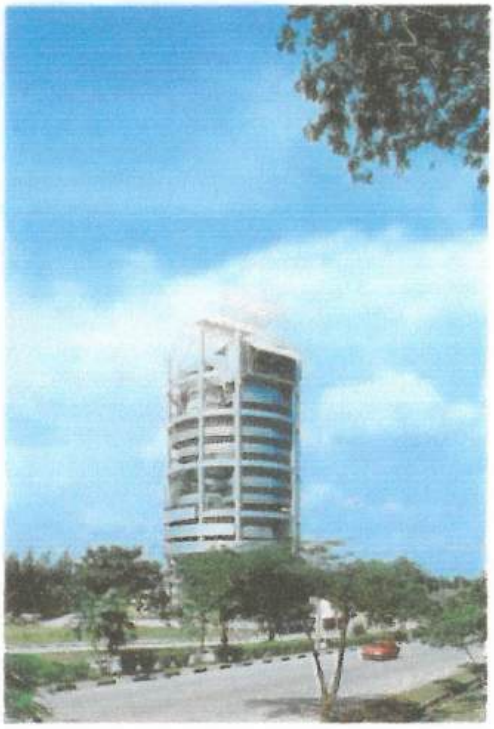
The concept of the traditional city in the Muslim world is captured by the use of the word *medina*, echoing in part, the new community founded by the Prophet after the *Hijra* marking the beginning of a new Muslim calendar and thus a revisioned sense of history. The conservation and rejuvenation of the historic core of Sana'a, Bukhara and Tunis and the attempts to create coherent, dignified shelters that empower the displaced and the migrants, can be said to create a resonance with the foundational values associated with a sense of community and a reappropriation of the historical heritage in contemporary life.

The second set of projects to receive awards are grouped under the theme: *Critical Architectural and Urbanistic Discourse*. Perhaps no other













Clockwise from left: 1. **Kaedi Regional Hospital,** Kaedi, Mauritania. Photographer: Kamran Adle. 2. **Mosque of the Grand National Assembly,** Ankara, Turkey. Photographer: Reha Guney. 3. **Alliance Franco Senegalaise,** Kaolack, Senegal. Photographer: Kamran Adle. 4. **Landscaping Integration of the Soekarno-Hatta Airport,** Cengkareng, Indonesia. Photographer: Yon Antar. 5. **Reforestation Programme of the Middle East Technical University,** Ankara, Turkey. Photographer: Guven Incirlioglu. 6. **Menara Mesiniaga,** Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Photographer: K.L. Ng.

human scale for communal gathering and a direction for individual, spiritual awakening.

A modern, national mosque such as the *Grand National Assembly Mosque* in Ankara, Turkey, carried the additional burden of being a symbol of religious pursuit, within a well-defined secular setting - the Grand Assembly. It introduces a dialogue between the "sacred" and the "secular" where none was initially anticipated in 1923 when the secular Republic of Turkey came into being and where the two realms were defined for long by an antithetical relationship.

The Mosque has been recognised for its bold vision and departure from conventional markers associated with a traditional mosque design. Modest in its aim, it has softened the visual impact of the traditional lofty minaret and the high dome, through the use of two flat balconies and by covering the prayer-hall with a stepped pyramid. Much more dramatic is the qibla, whose entire wall is made of glass providing a view of a garden, with a waterfall emptying into a pool. Thus elements associated traditionally with the mosque appear abstracted and even fragmented, emphasising the newness and presenting a contrast with established patterns of the past.

Religious identity is read more easily by people in buildings such as churches, synagogues, temples and mosques, perhaps because they are perceived more specifically as containers and reservoirs of memory and strongly-held beliefs and because they encode more intensely the values that bind people to faith. Reconfigurations of such focal structures can be controversial and even alienating if they jar people's memories and affiliations too strongly. That does not mean that new directions ought not to be attempted. Particularly, in times of literalist and closed readings of religious "texts" whether they are embodied in scripture, ritual or in buildings, there is need for boldness, a vision that is still true to the goal of enabling religious centres to open up the human spirit and to create a resonance with community and the idea of spirituality as a lived and felt experience. Ultimately, they must move rather than dominate or constrain the human spirit. One aspect of the achievement of this mosque is the possibility it opens up from a positive conversation with the past and a dialogue among those who wish for such spaces to become reflective and inclusive of a "thoughtful" Muslim modernity, in all of its aspects.

In his closing remarks His Highness the Aga Khan emphasised the key issues and lessons raised in this cycle of the Award: the willingness to debate issues at the highest level, the credibility gained by the work of the Master Jury and the Reviewers and the constant affirmation of the ethical perspectives that ought to guide approaches to the problems of the poor, the environment and the use of resources. In his view, the Award continued to be an inspiring endeavour, looking backwards but also forward to create inspiration for the future.

Azim Nanji is Professor and Chair of the Department of Religion at the University of Florida. He was a member of the Master Jury of the Awards presented in 1992 in Samarkand. This overview of the 1995 Awards is based on the Award Ceremony, Symposium and the publication *Architecture beyond Architecture*. Edited by Cynthia C Davidson with Ismail Serageldin (London: Academic Edition, 1995).



The Aga Khan Award for Architecture

The 1995 Master Jury

Twelve winners of the 1995 Aga Khan Award for Architecture were announced on November 25, 1995, in Solo, Indonesia. Each of them, in the view of the 1995 Award Master Jury, makes a statement in a new critical discourse on architecture. "The architectural and social problems facing Muslim societies require a sharper critique than they have received in the past", the Master Jury declared following its final deliberations in June 1995. During its discussions of the 442 projects nominated for the 1995 Award, three types of critical discourse came to shape the debate: critical social discourse, critical architectural and urbanistic discourse, and discourse about innovative concepts. The categories which organised their debate have become the categories of the 1995 Award.

Five projects have been recognised for their contribution to a critical social discourse: the Restoration of Bukhara Old City (Uzbekistan), Conservation of Old Sana'a (Yemen), Reconstruction of Hafsia Quarter, Phase II (Tunis, Tunisia), Khuda-ki-Basti Incremental Development Scheme (Hyderabad, Pakistan) and Aranya Community Housing (Indore, India). Three projects have been awarded prizes in the category of critical architectural and urbanistic discourse: the Great Mosque of Riyadh and Redevelopment of the Old City Centre (Saudi Arabia), the Menara Mesiniaga (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia), and the Kaedi Regional Hospital (Mauritania). The third category reflects the Jury' s decision to encourage bold ideas and risk-taking as well as strictly conceived architectural merit. For their innovative concepts, the Master Jury has conferred awards on the Mosque of the Grand National Assembly (Ankara, Turkey), the Alliance Franco-Senegalaise (Kaolack, Senegal), the Landscaping Integration of the Soekarno-Hatta Airport (Cengkareng, Indonesia) and the Middle East Technical University Re-Forestation Programme (Ankara, Turkey).

With these choices, the Master Jury has sought to distinguish multiple alternatives to the impasses in architecture and society today. The messages which the winning projects convey are, in the view of the Jury, "of

1. Restoration of Bukhara Old City, Bukhara, Uzbekistan

Completed 1975 and ongoing

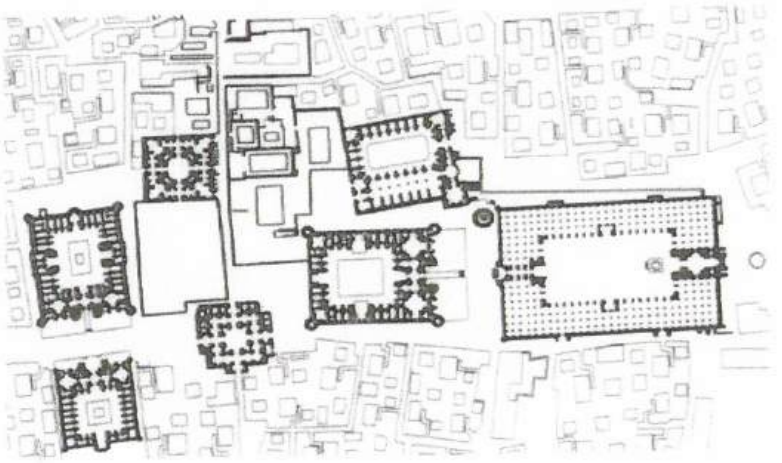
Restoration: Restoration Institute of Uzbekistan, Restoration Office of the Municipality of Bukhara

Client: Municipality of Bukhara



Managed by the municipality and supported by the community, the current programme for the revitalisation of the Old City of Bukhara has succeeded in integrating the historic core into the modern city. Many of Bukhara's more than 500 monuments are being restored using traditional materials like baked brick and *ganj* mortar; they also incorporate modern materials like reinforced concrete in order to comply with contemporary state regulations for earthquake protection. The buildings are being re-used: retail trade is thriving in restored trading domes, the Mir-i Arab madrasa is functioning, and other restored buildings have become craft centres or ateliers. Streets have been paved, electricity supplies have been upgraded, and a sewage system installed. These efforts have galvanised construction and economic activities in the areas surrounding the old city, and the programme now focuses as much on the surrounding urban fabric and on the re-use of monuments as on the physical fabric itself. The project proves that historic sites can be more than museums or tourist attractions: restored and reused, they can function as integral parts of flourishing and bustling contemporary cities.

Partial plan of the old city, showing some of the 500 monuments being restored



universal relevance and constitute an important contribution that the architecture of Muslim societies today can make to the architectural and social discourse of the world." The 1995 Aga Khan Award for Architecture has thus been designed to engage a new thinking process, able to move beyond conventional ideologies of modernism as well as fundamentalist approaches to tradition.

The Master Jury of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture is an independent body chosen by the Award Steering Committee for each three year Award cycle. The members of the Master Jury for the 1993-1995 cycle are Mohammad Arkoun, Nayyar Ali Dada, Darmawan Prawirohardjo, Peter Eisenman, Charles Jencks, Mehmet Konuralp, Luis Monreal, Ismail Serageldin, and Alvaro Siza.

The 1995 Master Jury, which met in Geneva three times over the past two years, has taken the unprecedented step of making its debates and its critiques of the winning projects public in a book, Architecture Beyond Architecture: Creativity and Social Transformations in Islamic Cultures, which was published by Academy Editions, London, at the time of the Award ceremony.

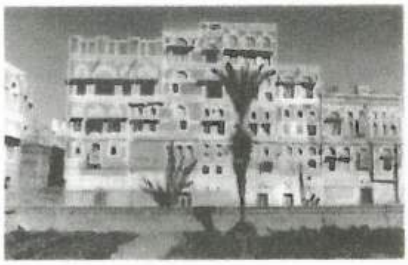


From left to right, first row: Princess Zahra Aga Khan, His Highness The Aga Khan, Nurcholish Madjid, Ant Hasan, Sir Bernard Feilden, Charles Jencks; **second row:** Ali Shuaibi, Ismail Serageldin, Peter Eisenman, Dogan Tekeli; **third row:** Mohammed Arkoun, Mehmet Konuralp, Luis Monreal, Darmawan Prawirohardjo, Frank Gehry; **fourth row:** John de Monchaux, Nayyar Ali Dada, Suha Ozkan

2. Conservation of Old Sana'a, Sana'a, Yemen

Completed 1987 and ongoing

Conservation: General Organisation for the Preservation of the Historic Cities of Yemen



Sana'a's highly decorated multi-storey houses, tall minarets, and vegetable gardens define a unique urban landscape which the General Organisation for the Preservation of the Historic Cities of Yemen (GOPHCY), supported by international and bilateral development agencies, is striving to preserve and revitalise. Since the 1980s, water and drainage systems have been upgraded, telephone and electricity lines have been installed, and an especially successful paving project has revitalised parts of the old city. Derelict buildings in old Sana'a have been restored and are now being re-used, and these GOPHCY-sponsored projects have catalysed private renovation projects as well as revitalisation efforts outside the old city. Yemeni architects and craftsmen were trained by foreign architectural conservators in the early projects and are now carrying out sophisticated renovation work. Better hygiene and services have hopefully arrested the deterioration of the quality of life in areas of old Sana'a. The conservation project, which has greatly benefited from support of UNESCO and other external agencies, has set in motion a positive dynamic. It proves that even under difficult conditions, much can be done to meet the challenges of old cities.

Site Plan
The conservation programme addressed Old Sana'a on both the urban and architectural levels.



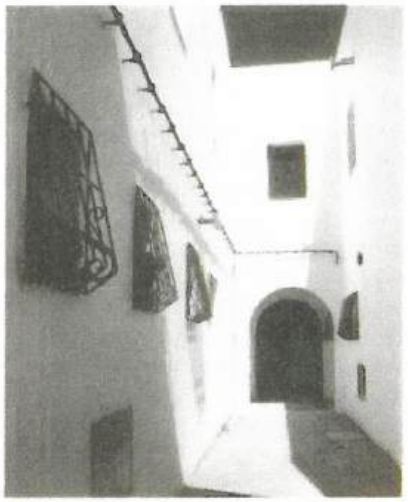
3. Reconstruction of Hafsia Quarter II, Tunis, Tunisia

Completed 1986 and ongoing

Planners/architects Association de Sauvegarde de la Medina de Tunis

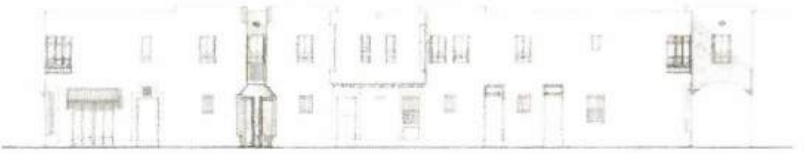
Client: Municipality of Tunis

Developer: Agence de Rehabilitation et Renovation Urbaine



The integrated approach to the Hafsia quarter of the medina of Tunis has succeeded in reversing deterioration which began under the French protectorate, when wealthy families abandoned the neighbourhood for the new "European" city. Phase II of the Hafsia Project, designed by the Association de Sauvegarde de la Medina de Tunis (ASM), has achieved major improvements in the infrastructure while preserving and strengthening the traditional urban fabric of the medina. It has also revitalised the quarter's commercial area, replaced or rehabilitated much of its dilapidated housing, and fostered a new mix of inhabitants, of different income levels, in the quarter. The Association has spearheaded a badly-needed process of legislative reform which organises the relationship between landlords and tenants; it has also set up innovative credit arrangements which have made it possible for owners of houses to borrow for rehabilitation purposes and for a cross-subsidy system favouring the rehabilitation of older houses to be established. Phase I of the Hafsia Quarter project won an Aga Khan Award for Architecture in 1983. The ASM's successful treatment in Phase II, of the complex institutional and financial issues involved in the reconstruction of historic areas has made this a project worthy of study and emulation.

Elevation along 'rue du Tailleur' and 'rue des Epines'



4. Khuda-ki-Basti Incremental Development Scheme, Hyderabad, Pakistan

Completed 1989 and ongoing

Clients and Planners: Hyderabad Development Authority, Tasneem A Siddiqui



The Khuda-ki-Basti Incremental Development Scheme (KKB) was launched in 1986 by the Hyderabad Development Agency (HDA), whose director, Tasneem Siddiqui, wanted to design a programme capable of really reaching the urban poor. The HDA's priority was delivering plots to its target group and enabling future home owners to progress from a makeshift dwelling to a semi-permanent structure, often in mud brick, and finally to a pucca or permanent home with cement or brick walls, foundations, and a roof. To attract the lowest income groups, HDA stipulated that candidates had to settle on their plots before housing and infrastructure were built, and begin building within 14 days. Thereafter, how and what they built was up to them to decide. The technology level is self-help construction; technical assistance is available from SAIBAN, an NGO created by HDA in 1990 to link the people of KKB and the government. The entire cost of the developed plots is born by the beneficiaries. Water and electricity are available when residents are ready to obtain them; the project's unique sewage system funnels treated waste water into adjacent agricultural land and transforms solid waste into fertiliser. This project is financially sustainable and economically viable, and proves that it is possible to reach people usually considered to be unreachable.

7. Menara Mesiniaga, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

Completed 1992

Architects: T R Hamzah and Yeang Sdn Bhd

Client: Mesiniaga Sdn Bhd



IBM's fifteen-storey "bio-climatic" tower in Kuala Lumpur is a strong alternative to the usual corporate high-rise building. Its concrete and steel structure is thrown into relief by a clear spatial hierarchy: a raised green base created by the entrance garden; spiralling terraced gardens that wind around the whole height of the building; and a tubular crown on the roof (which houses a gymnasium and swimming pool, and will later accommodate solar panels). This "garden in the sky" successfully realises the goals which the architect, Ken Yeang, has set for climatically responsive skyscrapers in tropical environments: reducing costs by lowering energy consumption, making maximum use of natural light and ventilation, and integrating ecological values and benefits into the structure. It applies an international, "high tech" architectural vocabulary to concepts of environmental responsiveness in ways that weld it to its site in a surprisingly "local" way.

8. Kaedi Regional Hospital, Kaedi, Mauritania

Architects: Association pour le Development naturel d'une Architecture et d'un Urbanisme Africains, Fabrizio Carola

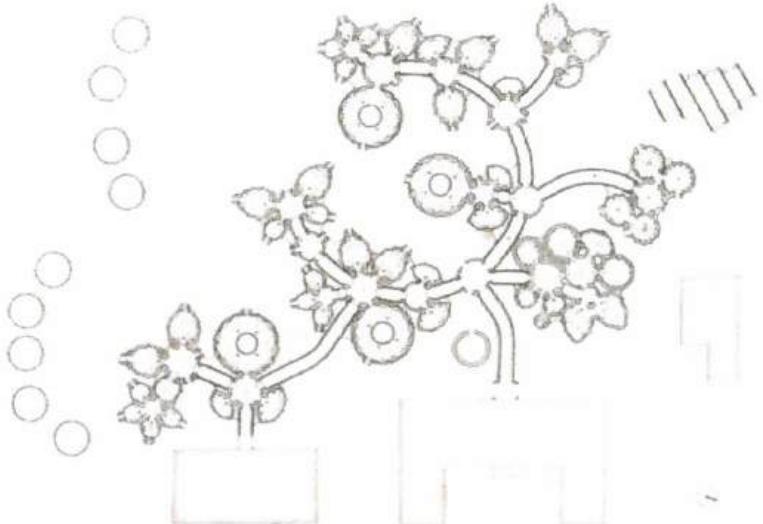
Client: Ministry of Health

Sponsor: European Development Fund



On behalf of the Association pour le Development naturel d'une Architecture et d'un Urbanisme Africains (ADAUA), Fabrizio Carola has built a low-cost extension to the local hospital in Kaedi which uses a new locally-produced structural brick in an original design of domes, vaults, and arches. The complex, elegant structures of the extension, which includes wards, operating theatres, storerooms, consultation rooms, and corridors, are providing improved medical and primary health care to a primarily rural population of patients, whose families can be accommodated in open, domed shelter areas created within the extension grounds. Use of brick has spared timber in a de-forested region; the doughnut and ovoid forms of the hospital's diverse units represent an original contribution to the art of brick building. The new hospital has become a source of pride to the people it serves, and proves that modern architecture which is innovative, affordable, and appropriate can be created in the region.

Site Plan
Each of the major elements of the building derives from the variety of structural systems developed on site.



5. Aranya Community Housing Indore, India

Completed 1989 and ongoing

Architect: Vastu-Shilpa Foundation, Balkrishna V Doshi

Client: Indore Development Authority



The Indore Development Authority's project to create Aranya township took shape in the early 1980s, a time of increasing awareness in India that conventional housing programmes had failed to reach the very poor. Instead of subsidising standard housing units, the Vastu-Shilpa Foundation focused on the provision of secure tenure, basic infrastructural services, and a "service core" for the future dwellings of the poorest owners which could be developed individually. The master plan includes a business district which functions as a central spine for six sectors, each of which combines shops, offices, and housing for a mix of different income groups. Good infrastructure was considered the most critical element in the project, which sought to catalyse the development of neighbourhoods and street life through overlapping, interactive domestic and community spaces where different communal groups could meet and mix. Purchasers of plots are free to proceed as they wish with the construction of their houses, but they have the benefit of seeing construction options presented in eighty demonstration houses designed by architect Balkrishna Doshi, ranging from one room shelters to one, two, and three storey brick houses. The unusual involvement of a "signature architect" in low-cost housing has had notable impact on the quality of construction in this project, which is also significant for the way it promotes inter-communal-co-operation and tolerance through its original spatial arrangements

6. Great Mosque of Riyadh and Redevelopment of the Old City Centre Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

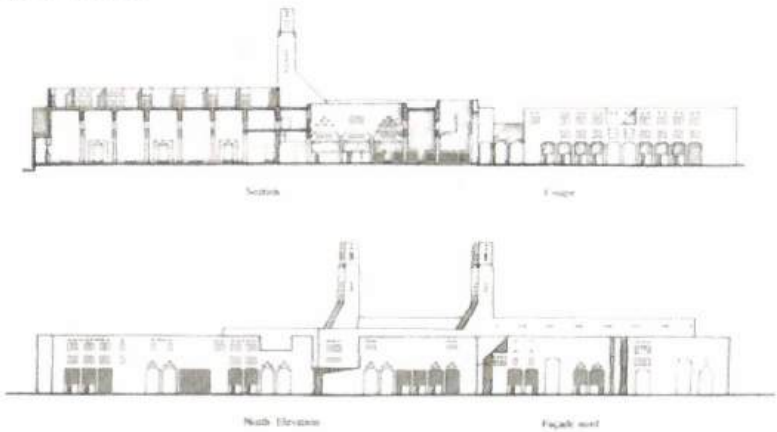
Completed 1992

Architect: Rasem Badran

Client: Arriyadh Development Authority



The growth of Riyadh, from a town of 25,000 inhabitants in 1950 to a city of over 3 million people today, has virtually obliterated the traditional building style of Saudi Arabia's Najd province, characterised by mud brick, flat roofs, and a distinctive decorative style. The Arriyadh Development Authority (ADA)'s project for the development of the old town as the core of the new city represents a powerful alternative: it has brought new construction into balance with the traditional architectural idiom and spatial relationships. Rasem Badran has defined the central core of Riyadh through a series of open spaces, including plazas, fountains, and courtyards, that connect the Great Mosque to its surroundings. His approach combines a reinterpretation of traditional Najdi architecture with an innovative yet unobtrusive use of modern materials and technologies. Badran and the ADA have succeeded in creating a modern urban complex while retaining the essence of its traditional frame.



11. Re-Forestation Programme of the Middle East Technical University, Ankara, Turkey

Completed 1960 and ongoing

Client and Planners: Middle East Technical University



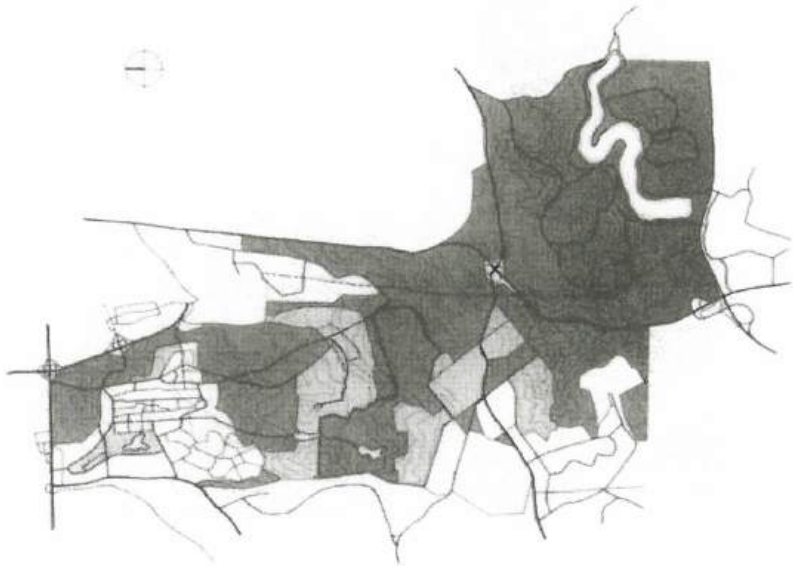
The campus of the Middle East Technical University (METU) was established in 1956 on a degraded, barren site outside Ankara, a heavily polluted city which suffered from dry summers and severe winters. The new university was determined to reclaim the site and model it through re-forestation and landscaping, and nearly 9 million conifers and over 22 million deciduous trees have been planted since 1961. Non-irrigational plantings cover most of the vast site; plants that require irrigation are principally located within the university's landscaped pedestrian network. Due to this project, once indigenous flora have returned to the area as well as some 150 different animal species. Ankara has become less polluted and its climate more temperate, and the whole of the city is now involved in a greening process. The project was initially considered to be unrealisable - sceptics thought that it would be impossible to recreate a forest in the climate of central Anatolia. The significance of its success goes beyond re-forestation and suggests that sensitive urban planning can provide approaches to two major contemporary crises: the disappearance of wilderness and the mass extinction of species.

Site Plan
Between 1961 and 1992, nearly 9 million conifers and over 2 million decisduous trees were planted.

Forest area (3100 hectacres)

Recreation area (500 hectacres)

Built up area (600 hectacres)

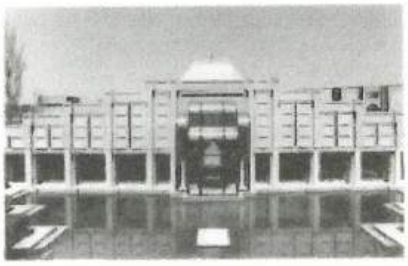


9. The Mosque of the Grand National Assembly, Ankara, Turkey

Completed 1989

Architects: Behruz and Can Cinici

Client: Turkish Grand National Assembly



This mosque, a low-key structure which deliberately avoids the monumentalism of the National Assembly complex where it is located, moves beyond conventional mosque architecture and points toward new directions in layout and design. Much of the mosque complex is hidden within the slope of the site, only parts of it rising above the surrounding landscape. This horizontal quality is reinforced by a fragmentary, abstract treatment of the conventional vocabulary. The minaret is represented by two balconies and a cypress tree; the dome is replaced by a terraced pyramid which gives the impression of growing out of the landscape. The mosque also incorporates completely new spatial arrangements, including a glass qibla wall and mihrab. The view is onto a sunken, terraced garden. This mosque eschews dependence upon the architectural conventions of the past; it defines religious space through the treatment of form, space, and light, and the relationships of landscape and building. Behruz and Can Cinici have made a powerful statement about new symbolic possibilities and design alternatives for the mosque in the contemporary world.

Section
The prayer hall is covered by a dominating stepped pyramid replacing the usual dome



10. Alliance Franco-Senegalaise, Kaolack, Senegal

Completed 1994

Architect: Patrick Dujarric

Client: Mission de Cooperation et d'Action Culturelle



The decorative audacity of architect-anthropologist Patrick Dujarric has given exceptional resonance to the modern vernacular building housing this new cultural centre in Kaolack, a regional centre in Senegal. It uses technologies and materials common throughout the region in a three-part design - including classrooms, an open-air theatre, and an exhibition space - which has an open, village-like aspect and a familiar, domestic scale. The modesty of this popular, functional cultural centre is, however, belied by the virtuoso ornamentation of its different surfaces. Walls, PVC pipes, window screens, and floors all exploit the rich decorative resources of West Africa, from fabric designs to earth brick claustras. The result is an integration of ornament and structure which uses Africa's traditions in a totally original manner within a contemporary public building, and asks important questions about the ways in which buildings, today, can function as media.

South Elevation



Available from December 1995

Asia Pacific arts directory



Volume 1



Volume 2



Volume 3

This definitive three-volume listing and guide to the arts in the Asia Pacific region has been produced in association with UNESCO and is one of a series of regional profiles produced by Visiting Arts.

The directory is divided into three volumes: **Australasia and the Pacific** (Australia, Fiji, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu); **South-East Asia** (Brunei Darusaalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam); and **North-East Asia** (China, Hong Kong, Japan, Korea, Macau and Taiwan).

Covering all the art-forms, each country or territory of the region is accorded its own chapter. These include: an **introduction** with general background information on the territory concerned; an **arts overview**; information on the **cultural infrastructure**; and an **arts directory** listing cultural agencies, arts venues, festivals, training and research institutions, cultural libraries and resource centres and foundations which fund the arts. Each of the three volumes concludes with a general directory chapter which groups together those organizations whose cultural activity transcends national boundaries within the area covered by the volume.

If you would like to place an order or require further information, please contact:

Camilla Edwards
Visiting Arts
11 Portland Place
London W1N 4EJ
Telephone 0171-389 3018 (direct)
Fax 0171-389 3016

Established in 1977, the Visiting Arts Office of Great Britain and Northern Ireland is a joint venture of the Arts Council of England, the Scottish Arts Council, the Arts Council of Wales, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the Crafts Council, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and The British Council. It is an advisory, consultancy and information organization. It promotes and facilitates the flow of foreign arts into England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland in the context of the contribution they can make to the UK's bilateral and multilateral cultural relations, and the degree to which they encourage cultural awareness and foster mutually beneficial international arts contacts and activities at national, regional and institutional levels. Apart from its advisory, consultancy and information work Visiting Arts is involved in other activities such as publications and training related to specific groups relevant to Visiting Arts' objectives. It also administers grants through its Country Projects Awards.

Visiting Arts

12. Award winning projects

Landscaping Integration of the Soekarno-Hatta Airport, Cengkareng, Jakarta, Indonesia

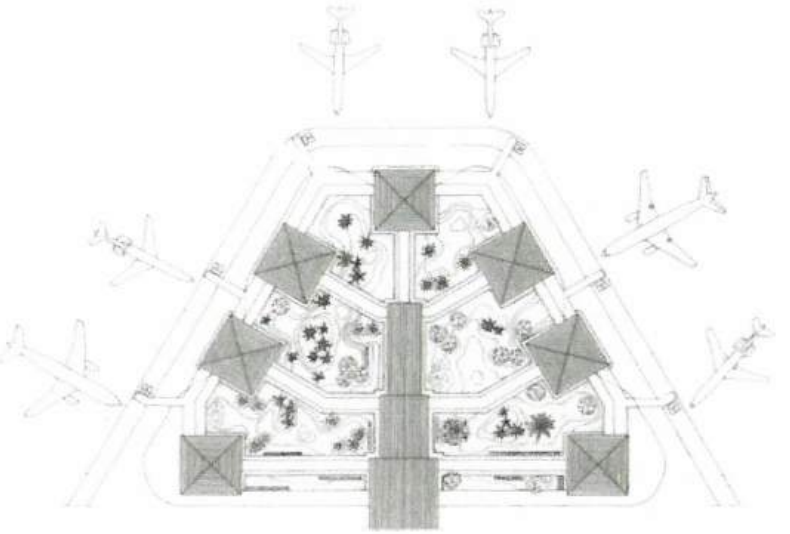
Architect: Aeroports de Paris, Paul Andreu

Client: Ministry of Communications



With airport terminals conceived as open pavilions embedded in the tropical landscape, Paul Andreu's design for the Soekarno-Hatta Airport in Jakarta combines nature, Javanese culture, and a facility serving 18 million passengers per year. Closeness to nature has been the keynote through both phases of the airport's construction: each terminal is set in sculptured gardens which include facilities for gathering or contemplation, and the design serves as a unique introduction to the open landscape and the culture of Indonesia even as it meets exacting technological- requirements. For Terminal II, the airport authorities requested changes, notably full air-conditioning, that necessitated partitions between the landscape and the pavilions. These have been realised in glass, and the second terminal retains the relationship to landscape and the visual impact of the first. The success of landscaping integration in this airport suggests that landscaping can be effectively included in other contemporary building types, from housing to offices and shopping malls.

Terminal Plan
The courtyards formed by the pavilions are landscaped and planted with a variety of tropical plants.



Honouring the Winning Projects

The Aga Khan Award for Architecture was established by the Aga Khan in 1977 to identify and encourage building concepts that successfully address the needs and aspirations of Muslim societies. It recognises examples of architectural excellence throughout the Muslim world in contemporary design, social housing, community improvement and development, restoration, re-use and area conservation, as well as the environment and land-scape design. The Award is part of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture, which co-ordinates the cultural activities of the Aga Khan Development Network.

The awards are made by an independent Master Jury at the conclusion of a selection process each three years. The Master Jury for the 1993-1995 Award cycle was named by the Award's Steering Committee in 1992. The members of the Steering Committee for this cycle are Sir Bernard Feilden, Frank O Gehry, Arif Hasan, Renata Holod, Nurcholish Madjid, Ali Shuaibi, Dogan Tekeli, and His Highness the Aga Khan, who is Chairman.

Ceremonies to honour the winning projects and mark the close of each triennial cycle have been held in settings selected for their historic importance to the Muslim world: Shalimar Gardens in Lahore (1980), Topkapi Palace in Istanbul (1983), Badi' Palace in Marrakesh (1986), the Citadel of Saladin in Cairo (1989), and Registan Square in Samarkand (1992). In November 1995, the sixth cycle of the Aga Khan Award for Architecture concluded with a ceremony in Indonesia, in the Sultan's palace (Karaton Surakarta) in Solo, central Java.



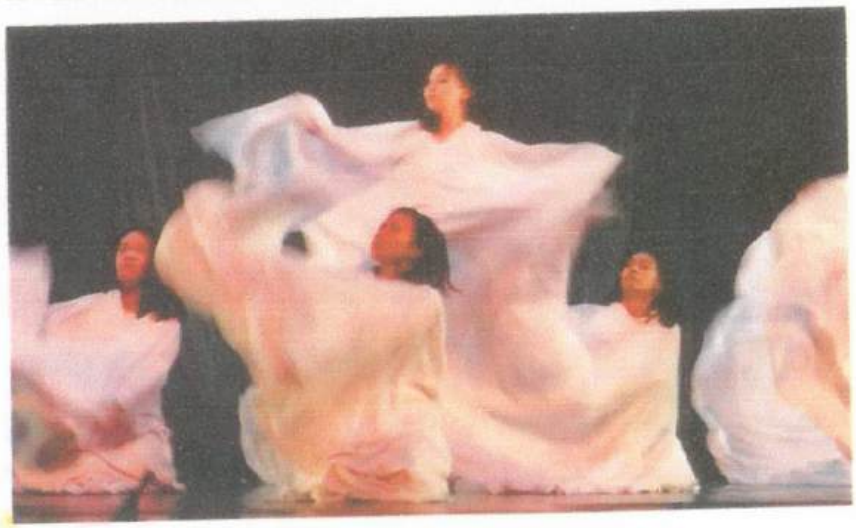












Clockwise from top left: 1. Wattaqullah by Syaiful Adnan. **2.** Demonstration of the illumination process of the Mushaf Istiqlal attended by President Soeharto and Madame Soeharto, accompanied by Finance Minister/General Chairman of the Second Istiqlal Festival Mar'ie Muhammad (right) and Professor A.D.Pirous of the Organizing Committee (left). **3.** Bosnia's Stand at the Istiqlal Festival. **4 & 5.** Dance performances at the inauguration ceremony of the Second Istiqlal Festival. **6.** Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Anwar Ibrahim accompanied by Minister Finance Mar'ie Muhammad - General Chairman of the Istiqlal Festival Organizing Committee listening to explanations of Professor A.D.Pirous on the Mushaf Istiqlal. 7. The main entrance of the Istiqlal Festival exhibition.

Indonesia celebrated 50 years of independence in a spirit of humility and exhilaration. Its secular polity was underlined by multicultural events throughout its several thousand islands, and its deeply religious and spiritual core was symbolised by the Istiqlal Festival of Islamic Art and Culture at various venues in and around the splendid Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta. The reports in the pages that follow have been guest-edited by our Contributing Editor in Indonesia, Ferdy Salim.

Indonesia's Istiqlal Festival

FERDY SALIM

After the unprecedented success of the first Istiqlal Festival of Indonesian Islamic Arts and Culture in 1991, attended by 6.2 million people, the Istiqlal Festival Foundation hosted Istiqlal II during the months of September-November 1995 at the Grand Istiqlal Mosque in Jakarta.

This Second Festival, which also commemorated Indonesia's 50 year's Independence – its Golden Anniversary – was larger in scale, longer in duration, and offered more activities, attracting local as well as foreign participation. Whereas in 1991, the foreign participants were limited to ASEAN countries and China, this Second Festival had visitors from many Muslim countries of the Middle East and Africa, including Egypt, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Lebanon, Tunis, Morocco, Palestine and Sudan, apart from Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Singapore, Uzbekistan and Bosnia, and included non-Muslim countries having a considerable Muslim population, such as India and the UK.

Many internationally prominent people were present, among them Malaysia's Deputy Prime Minister, Dr Anwar Ibrahim, Egypt's Sheikh of the Al Azhar, Ali Gade Al Haque, and Dr Hassan Hanafi, Turkey's Prof Dr Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, M H Faruqi, Dr Abdul Hamid Al Gabid, Dr Ahmad Mohammad Ali, M Jafar Ul Haq, Ikrimah Sabri, and Dr Mustafa Cefik. Ministers of Religious Affairs (Awqaf) from Jordan, Morocco, Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Egypt, Bahrain and UAE were also present.

This Second Istiqlal Festival drew almost eleven million visitors, both domestic and foreign.

In his inaugural speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Second Istiqlal Festival, on 28 September 1995, President Al Haj Mohammad Soeharto said that for a nation of people who strongly adhere to religion, art not only gives a spiritual aspect to the sense of beauty, but also turns the nation's conscience to those matters in life which are more profound and principled. Spiritual progress, he said, is as crucial as material progress for Indonesia's development. What is the use of material progress if spiritually we remain barren and suffering.

This religion-inspired Festival presented the moral, ethical and spiritual aspects of Indonesia's development, and strengthened sense of nationalism of its people. It had the Istiqlal *Mushaf* as prima donna, a compilation of Quranic Scriptures with illumination derived from traditional decorations representing the 42 cultural regions of Indonesia's 27 provinces.

The 123 by 88cm manuscript of 938 pages is the result of a major undertaking by 70 talented young Indonesian artists. It was begun four years ago, when President Soeharto recorded the Basmallah (In the name of God) phrase in it.

This Istiqlal *Mushaf*, which does not deviate from the original Mushaf Uthman, codified 14 centuries ago, is considered the grandest achievement of the Indonesian people and was on display during the Festival.

The realisation of the *Mushaf* Istiqlal has been the responsibility of Mr Pontjo Sutowo, Executive Chairman of the Mushaf Istiqlal Committee, with the assistance of Prof A D Pirous, architect Achmad Noe'man, art researcher Mahmud Buchari and Coordinator Ferdy Salim.

The Festival further presented various cultural products (heritage and contemporary) and performances (song, dance, theatre and poetry) inspired by Islam.

One gallery at the Grand Istiqlal Mosque was allocated to the display of various ancient and contemporary books and manuscripts, including Qur'ans.

Contemporary Qur'ans from all over the world were on display from both Muslim and non-Muslim countries, such as Russia, Poland, Finland, Hungary, Kenya, Uganda, China, France, Japan, Czechoslovakia, and Italy - translated into their respective national languages.

A copy of one of the first Qur'ans in the world, written in the 7th century during the reign of the Caliph Uthman bin Affan, the authentic original of which according to historians still seems to exist and preserved in a museum in Tashkent (Uzbekistan), was on display by courtesy of the Government of Uzbekistan.

A copy of a letter of the Prophet Muhammad – written in 648 by his Secretary Zaid bin Tsabit to Heraclius, Emperor of the Byzantium Empire, urging him to embrace Islam, was also on display by courtesy of the Jordanian Government. Seven other letters with the same invitation were sent by the Prophet to the monarchs of Habashah (Ethiopia), Egypt, Persia, Bahrain, Yamama, Damashk and Amman.

The attractions included maquettes (models) of the Masjid al-Haram of Makkah, the Masjid al-Aqsa in Jerusalem, the newly built Hassan the Second Mosque in Casablanca in Morocco, considered to be the ultimate Eastern Mosque of the Islamic World, and photographs of Mosques in Indonesia and around the world, whose architectural styles were inspired in various ways by the teachings of Islam.

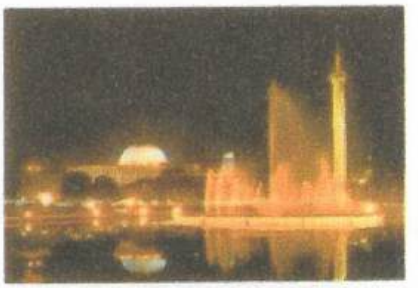
During the 2 months, the festival organisers also held a number of competitions, including the *adhan* (the





Above: Vice President Tri Sutrisno handing over a copy of the Mushaf Istiqlal to Kyai Haji Basri Chairman of the Majlis Ulama Islam, The Islamic Supreme Council, during the closing ceremony of the Second Istiqlal Festival on November 18 1995.









Top: President Soeharto signing a declaration launching the Mushaf Istiqlal – the Holy Qur'an designed and written by 70 talented young Indonesian artists which took 4 years to finalise, at the inauguration ceremony of the second Istiqlal Festival on September 28, 1995. **Middle, left:** The Bimbo Quartet at a dance performance. **Middle right, top:** The Istiqlal Grand Mosque in Jakarta. **Middle right, bottom:** Declamation on a raft in a river in the Istiqlal Mosque garden. **Above:** Prayers at the Istiqlal Grand Mosque.

call to prayer); Sajada (Islamic prayer rug) design; the art of calligraphy; scientific writing; photo contests; the art of Mushaf (design of mushaf illumination and calligraphy) etc.

Apart from this, national and international seminars, symposia and discussions were held in which international Islamic scholars took part.

A Muslim fashion show was also organised, and an international Islamic Poetry Reading in which many Muslim countries participated was successfully held. It was decided that this event would be held every three years. Lastly, an international Film Show was held, showing films from different Muslim countries.

In his speech at the closing ceremony of the Second Istiqlal Festival, Vice President Try Sutrisno called on the people to strengthen their religious faith in the face of globalisation.

He said that we should bear in mind that we are a pious nation which upholds religious norms in all our conduct.

According to Vice President Try Sutrisno, it is obvious that religion is a source of motivation and inspiration to Indonesians in their efforts to develop the country.

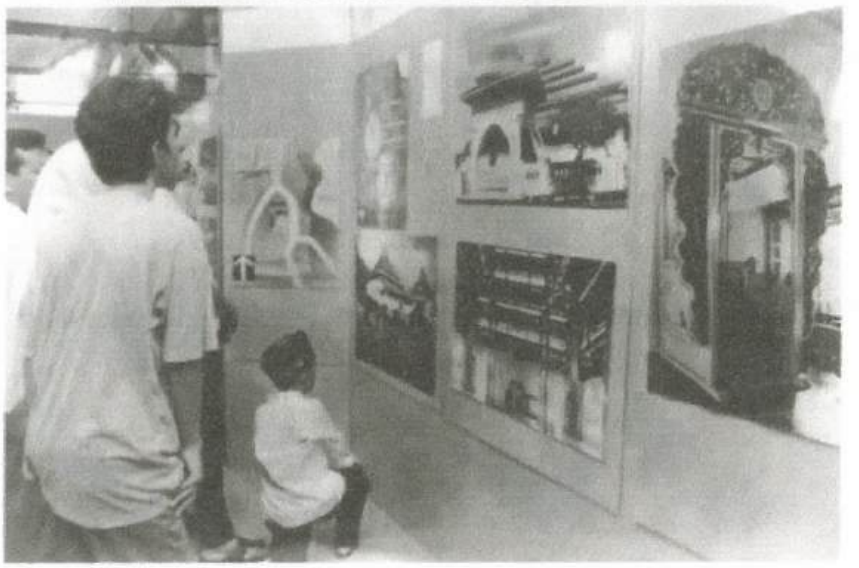
The Vice President also warned that the religious tolerance that has been the pillar of this nation should not mean that followers of the various religions should sacrifice their beliefs for the sake of religious harmony; nor should it mean a malpractice of religious teachings.

The Vice President further hoped that festivals like this one could be held regularly, as its impact, as shown in Indonesia, and certainly also for the Muslims in other Muslim countries, has been very positive. A third Istiqlal Festival has already been decided on for the year 2000 in Jakarta.

The General Chairman of the Festival Organising Committee, Minister of Finance Mar'ie Muhammad, noted that the total of almost 11 million people visiting the festival was very satisfying as it proved that the religious spirit was still alive and even growing, especially among the younger generation, even though they were very much open to the influences of the modern way of life, rather uncensored, being brought into society though international TV and radio broadcasts which freely entered the country.

The experience gained through the realisation of both Istiqlal Festivals (I&II) convinced the Istiqlal Foundation that activities like these are very important for the maintenance, growth and development of the nation's culture.





Top: The public admiring photographs of the old Mosque of the Sultan of Ternate, an island in East Indonesia. **Above:** Ceremony of the opening of boxes with donations from people visiting the Istiqlal Festival as token of solidarity with the people of Bosnia in their struggle for independence, attended by Mr Prebo Sutedjo and Mr Lukman Harun of the Solidarity Committee to Bosnia accompanied by Mr Ponto Sutowo, Executive Chairman of the Istiqlal Festival.

The Istiqlal Festival has not only left its mark on the national culture, but has also influenced other countries having a substantial Muslim population. Comments and reports received proved that Istiqlal Festivals One and two have drawn much international attention.

The Istiqlal Festivals also confirmed the Indonesian nation's identity amidst the increasing influence of materialism, which has been growing in the world at large.

It has therefore been decided that these Festivals should be continued with a Third Istiqlal Festival already in preparation for the year 2000, the year which will herald the changing of the 20th century into the 21st.

It goes without saying that the experience gained from the realisation of Istiqlal Festivals I and II will be of great value in the organisation of Istiqlal festival III, in terms both of quality and size.

It is hoped that Istiqlal Festival III will be attended by people from countries around the world, so that it will acquire a more international character.

This wish and hope find their source in the realisation that with the approach of the 21st century, global culture and civilisation are more and more turning towards free trade, freedom of information, and consumerism which will be a big challenge for the Islamic community.

Therefore resilience of the Islamic community needs to be strengthened and reinforced by the cultural aspects of Islamic teaching, which is based on Tawhid and the efforts towards this culture should be made a primary goal of the Islamic ummah in Indonesia and throughout the world.

By the Grace of God, the Almighty,





Top: The Prosperous Parahyangan by Erna. 100 × 100 cm. 1994. **Right:** Visiting artists Ibrahim (Palestine), Shahid Sajjad (Pakistan), Arsono (Indonesia) and Joseph Basbous (Lebanon) at Serambi Pirous.

clippings, catalogues, magazines and bulletins. Thus, in future, Serambi Pirous will become one of the centres for further study in art.

Building a centre for structuring the ideas of art values is not an easy task. A D Pirous mentioned that ideally Serambi Pirous should bring together all his major works of art. However, since his works were held in various places, including public and private collections, he realized that it would not be easy to get them back together. "Even to manage and programme this kind of business needs professional capabilities and a lot of time and money," he said. But at least he has made a start.

Art circles in Indonesia know A D Pirous as a prominent artist who is active not only as an artist, but as a thinker, entrepreneur, curator and a leader of the Indonesian Art Delegations to various international forums. Undoubtedly, Serambi Pirous, even in its present modest condition, will become one of the centres of attraction in Indonesia as well as at the international level. In view of the need to establish a centre to develop

Serambi Pirous: A Landmark in Bandung

MAMANNOOR

Indonesian art is now facing various development possibilities as a result of the influence of pluralistic views coming to the fore in cultural life everywhere. On the one hand, it would be desirable for it to exist as a cultural product which reflects an aesthetic image of the Indonesian identity. On the other hand, fine art in Indonesia has developed an international flavour as part of the art of the world. Therefore, Indonesia is now actively participating in various events, exhibitions and seminars all over the Asia-Pacific region, as well as in other parts of the world.

In the past decade, Indonesian art has been involved in various developmental activities. Indonesian artists, either individually or in groups, have made certain breakthroughs in their work and their relationships with others. In the last few years, there have been several events in Indonesia, such as the biennial presenting of awards, international exhibitions such as the Contemporary Art Exhibition of the Non-Aligned Countries, the Istiqlal Festival and Nur Gora Rupa and international workshops in collaboration with the Netherlands, Germany, Japan and China. Several overseas activities such as international exhibitions and workshops on art have been attended by Indonesian artists, and they also participated in contemporary art forums in Australia, (Perth and Brisbane), the Philippines (Bagguio), Japan (Fukoka, Tokyo and Kyoto), Germany (Berlin, Cologne and Braunschweig), the Netherlands and the United States. These forums have certainly encouraged Indonesian artists to expand their thinking and produce works relating to wider areas and universal issues. Furthermore, the ideas and works of Indonesian artists are expected to contribute to art issues in the developing countries.

The influence of international art on Indonesian artists is not merely a matter of developing aesthetic issues. International relationships also contribute to the potential for commercial gain in the field of art. In the last part of the 1980s, there was a peak in the art market in the form of auctions, sale centres and unexpected activity among collectors vying to get the best pieces. Observers spoke of the Indonesian art boom. This situation was confirmed later by the data from Christies' auction house in Singapore, which showed that Indonesian paintings were receiving increasing appreciation.

One result of the boom in the domestic art market has been the enhancing of artists' social status in society. Apparently, economic development in the country greatly contributed to the appreciation of art. Among the upper middle classes and the nouveau riche, there is now a tendency to regard works of art as worthwhile new investments. This has led to a growing enthusiasm for the business of art, marked by the establishment of a number of commmercial galleries in several big cities in Indonesia. In a relatively short time, artists developed an urge to build their own studios, galleries and private museums to increase the production and sale of their work.

This situation, however, created an imbalance in the provision of ideal places, for the government had not thought of providing a place to show art collections with greater emphasis on appreciation than commerce. Art circles in Indonesia realised that the country has no proper infrastructure to correct this imbalance. Basic views, strategies and orientations are as yet not being taken seriously enough. The weaknesses of Indonesian art development are due to a lack of studies, records, publicity and planned education, as the speedy growth in the production of works of art has not been accompanied by a system of value control and the monitoring of scientific knowledge. There is also a lack effort applied to writing critical reviews.

However, there are some prominent figures in art who have tried hard to redress this imbalance. One of these is Professor A D Pirous, who has done a lot to identify and maintain the right and proper direction for development. He, along with a group of artists who share the same views, has tried to create social conditions favourable to the development of art in Indonesia as well as overseas.

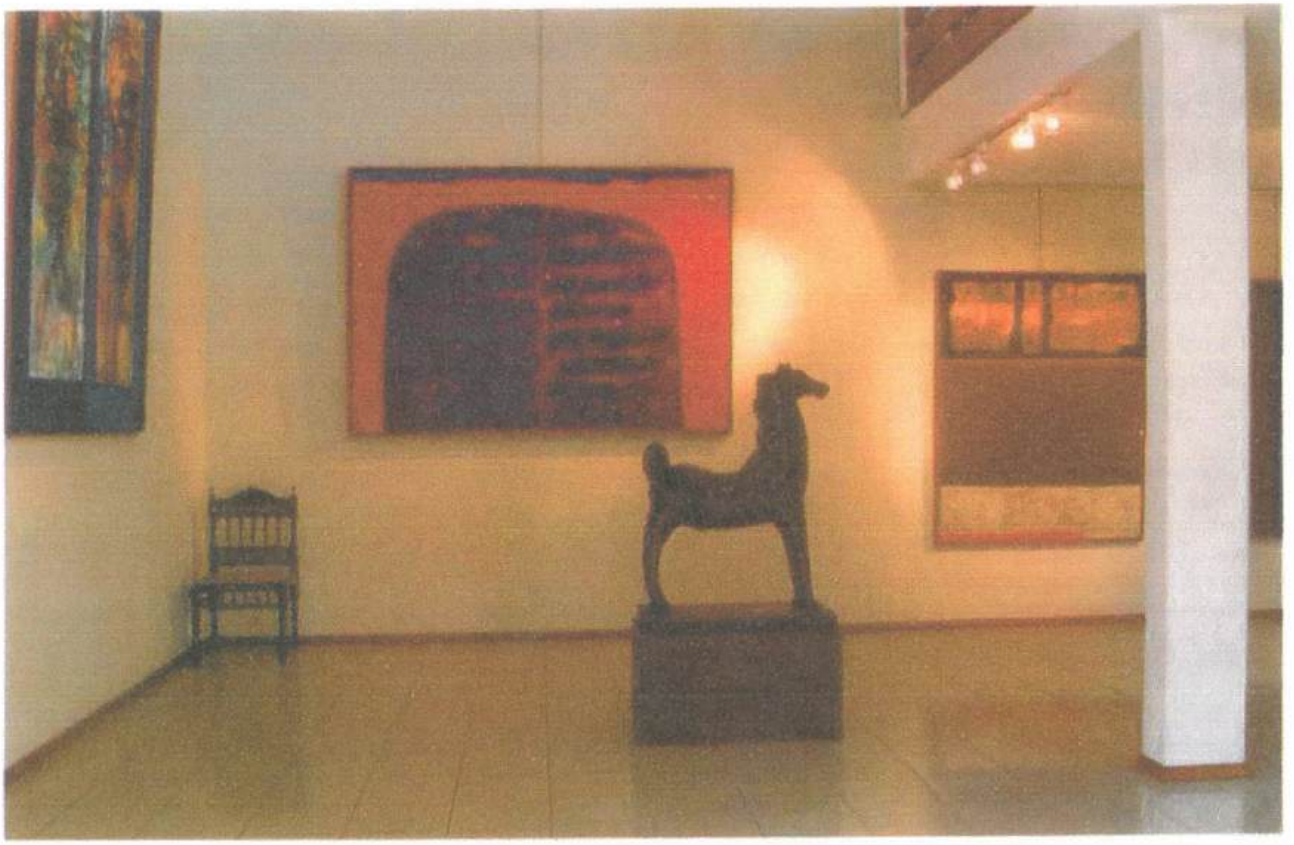
He has been the chairman of steering committees, juror, curator and a key speaker in the national forum to study art values. He was appointed head of the Indonesian Art Delegation to several international events. His role in the Asian Art International Forum has been to express the concept of a structure for the collaboration of views and works. Specifically, in Istiqlal Festivals, A D Pirous has been concerned with a basic concept of Indonesian culture with reference to Islamic spirituality.

In order to maintain an art image for Indonesia which included Islamic spirituality, attempts had to be made to establish a stable institution. This was needed as a place for activities and as a practical and pragmatic way of maintaining a development orientation. For this purpose, he presented the idea of establishing a private museum and gallery as a means of promoting the appreciation of art. Since the government had not yet provided such a place, it seemed a good alternative for artists themselves to build a private museum.

Since the end of the 1980s, private museums and galleries have been established in several parts of Indonesia, such as Jakarta, Bandung, Yogyakarta, Surabaya and Bali. That of A D Pirous is one of them. He had long realised the importance of having a private museum and gallery in the city where he lives, Bandung, since it is one of the important cities in the framework of Islamic art, as well as a centre for education in the development of Indonesian modern art.

Serambi Pirous was the name chosen for his gallery by A D Pirous: "serambi" means "porch" or "veranda", a place where people can chat, have discussions and entertain guests. He intended his gallery to have these functions as well as being a place to display art. This collection has been specifically chosen to develop art values. In addition, Serambi Pirous is used as a place to entertain specially invited guests, artists from Indonesia and overseas, for discussions, workshops and meetings free from the climate of the commercial side of art.

Serambi Pirous has so far been used to display the artist's own works and those of his wife Erna Garnaish Pirous, as well as his collections of other artists' works. A D Pirous's works include paintings, graphics and sketches. Because he is a prominent painter and one of the pioneers of Islamic calligraphy in Indonesia, he has given Serambi Pirous a special image as a place for works of calligraphy. Here we can also get a clear picture of the long path of Pirous's career as an artist. Pirous has a plan to provide Serambi Pirous with information and records of Indonesian art, particularly that of Bandung, in the form of books.





Above: Main Entrance to Serambi Perous. **Left**: Second floor of the gallery

common views on art, it is gratifying that the country has a place such as Serambi Pirous. As the twenty first century approaches, Indonesian art has the potential to attract international attention to the Pacific region.

Efforts must now be made to publicize the results of research and study into the arts of Indonesia. A D Pirous is aware of this and he visualised and expressed it in the two Istiqlal Festivals, the first one in 1991 and the second in 1995. As a founder, originator of ideas, plannner, chief organizer and manager, he has obtained very useful experience in projecting the meaning and shape of Islamic Indonesian Art. At the second Istiqlal Festival, contemporary artists, in their exhibitions and international seminars, have shown an obvious understanding of Islamic art. There are still a number of things which could be done to carry out activities similar to the sucessful Istiqlal festivals, and hopefully many of these will emerge from the accumulation of ideas resulting from the establishment of Serambi Pirous.

NAM Contemporary Art Exhibition & Seminar

DJOKO SOEJONO

More than 400 works by artists from 41 countries were included in the exhibition "Contemporary Art of the Non-Aligned Countries" inaugurated by President Soeharto at the National Gallery in Jakarta.

The Exhibition, and a Seminar on NAM Contemporary Art were held in conjunction with the 50th Anniversary Celebration of the Republic of Indonesia, and coincided with the 40th Anniversary Commemoration of the historic Asia-Africa Conference held in Bandung in April 1955.

The Exhibition which opened on 28 April 1995 was witnessed by a large and distinguished audience comprising the President of the UN General Assembly and Mrs Amara Essy, 90 Ministers and around 200 delegates of NAM countries, the diplomatic corps, artists and curators from the participating countries.

The installation of the exhibit was based on themes rather than geographical division. The five themes recommended by the International Curatorial Board (ICB) were: 1. Confrontation-Quest-Question; 2. Tradition-Convention; 3. Signs-Symbols-Scripts; 4. The Body; and 5. Space-Land-Mankind. This thematic set-up was anticipated to generate a deeper insight among the participants as well as the general audience into the socio-cultural matrix of the Non-Aligned countries. Members of the ICB were: Mr Gulammohammed Sheik (India), Mrs Piedad Casas de Ballesteros (Columbia), Mr Emmanuel N Arinze (Nigeria), Mr T K Sabaphaty (Singapore), Mr Apinan Poshyananda (Thailand), Mr A D Pirous and Mr Jim Supangkat both from Indonesia.

Participating countries in the Exhibition were: Bangladesh, Brunei Darussalam, China, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Croatia, Egypt, Guinea, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Jordan, Kampuchea, North Korea, Kuwait, Malaysia, Madagascar, Mexico, Myanmar, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Sudan, Sychelles, Syria, Tanzania, Thailand, Thailand, Tunisia, Vietnam, Yemen and Zambia.

The Seminar, which was held at Hotel Indonesia, Jakarta, on April 29-30, focused on the theme of "Unity in Diversity in International Art". It discussed the development of art in countries of the South, as well as international art in general. It perceived international art as an international forum where similarities resulting from modernisation and differences emanating from local traditions are combined as a fresh attempt to understand the ongoing development of contemporary art around the world.

Together, the Exhibition and Seminar were the first ever held on the whole range of contemporary art of the NAM countries becoming a trend-setter of new development toward the recognition of plurality in the world's contemporary art, and a milestone that brings a new alternative to the established paradigms of universalism in art. This new trend is made possible by the sustainable development of the art of developing countries that, by virtue of its socio-cultural background, is rich in tradition, colour and values that are fundamental to its existence as well as its continuum within the scope of international contemporary art. The hitherto established viewpoint based on universalism needs to be verified to adapt itself to the changing international environment. The marginalisation of the South's contemporary art should, therefore, be addressed from a North-South conceptual framework rather than to be mired in contentious discussions of the North-South dichotomy.

This new perception is in line with the spirit that has inspired the policies and activities of the Non-Aligned Movement. Specially during the period of President Soeharto's tenure of office as the Chairman of the Non-Aligned movement in 1992-1995, this spirit has placed increasing emphasis on co-operation between the North and the South, as distinct from the confrontational approach that marked the previous decades.

The Seminar drew participants from the NAM countries as well as international art critics and experts. The topics discussed included "Contemporary Art and Multiculturalism", "Recent Developments of 'Southern' Contemporary Art", "The Importance of Local Cultural influences in 'Southern' Contemporary Art and their contribution to International Art Development", "Neo-traditional Art in the new North-South Context, with examples from Japan and Thailand", "International Contemporary Art: Artistic Movements within the Framework of International Contemporary Art", and "Contemporary Art of the Islamic World".

Presenters at the two-day Seminar were, among others, Ms Geeta Kapur, Art Critic and Author, Senior Fellow Indian Council for Historical Research, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, India; Ms Alice G Guilermo, Associate Professor of Art Studies, College of Arts and Letters, University of Singapore; Mr Apinan Poshsynanda, Associate Dean, Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Chulalangkorn University, Bangkok, Thailand; Mr Gulammohammed Sheikh, Freelance Artists and Writer, India; Mr Kuroda Raiji, Curator Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan; Ms Mary Jane Jacob, Independent Curator, Chicago Fukuoka Art Museum, Japan; Ms Barbara Asboth, Art Historian, Austria; Mr David Elliott, Director, Museum of Modern Art, Oxford, UK; and Mr John Clark, Senior Lecturer in Japanese, School of Asian Studies, University of Sydney, Australia.

The Exhibition and Seminar belong primarily to the realm of art and aesthetics. However, the potential of nations today to preserve their cultural heritage is a reflection of a nation's spiritual content. It is also a fact that art and cultural activities help to build bridges of international understanding and co-operation.

As President Soeharto aptly









Top left: President Soeharto delivering his opening address at the inauguration of the NAM Exhibition and Seminar in Jakarta, April 28-June 30, 1995. **Left:** Three Street Sweepers by Dede Eri Supria (Indonesia), oil on canvas, 140 × 140 cm, 1994. **Above, top:** Opening ceremony of NAM Exhibition and Seminar on Contemporary Art, April 28, 1995 at Indonesian National Gallery, Jakarta, attended by Ministers and delegates of NAM countries. **Above:** Painting by Negarandeh Afshar, Iran.

observed in his address to mark the opening of the Exhibition and Seminar of the NAM countries, "This exhibition is part of the spiritual content of member nations of the Non-Aligned Movement. All of us, fellow members of the Movement, must have a better understanding about each other, not only in political and economic terms, but also in the spiritual content of our respective nations."

In this age of globalization, cultural contacts among all nations have become an even greater imperative in our striving for a world of peace and common prosperity.

Mr Djoko Soejono is a member of the National Committee of the NAM Exhibition and Seminar.

Minangkabau in London

SYLVIA ARIFIN

To mark the country's 50th year of independence, the Indonesian Embassy in London organised several art and cultural events to introduce Indonesia's great diversity and richness. The presentations started in May 1995, when Tiara Indah Foundation, in co-operation with the Indonesian Embassy, presented "Faces of Indonesia 1995", a parade of Indonesian dancers, singers and fashion designers from the various provinces of Indonesia: among others, Jawa, Bali, Sumatra and East Timor. In June the Embassy hosted two events, the Indonesian food festival at the Hilton in Park Lane and the cultural show, "The shimmering gold of Minangkabau".





Sumatra is one of the five largest Islands in Indonesia (the others being Kalimantan, Irian Jaya, Jawa, and Sulawesi). Sumatra means "The Island of Gold". It is an appropriate name, as in west Sumatra or Minangkabau (another name for west Sumatra), the weaving industry spins gold into various materials to make the traditional Minangkabau costumes. Gold is also used in women's traditional hair ornaments. Minangkabau means "Triumphant Buffalo" and is derived from a legend that a Minangkabau Buffalo once won a bull fight competition. The shape of the roofs as well as women's head-dress is in honour of the legendary buffalo.

Islam and the traditional customs are both warmly embraced and there is a saying in Minangkabau, "Adat Basandi Syara', Syara' Basandi Kitabulah" which means "Religion is the pillar of tradition, and tradition is the pillar of religion". Mosques are scattered throughout west Sumatra, not only in big cities but also in small villages. The influences of the Arab scholars and traders is also inherent in the Minangkabau culture. This can be seen in women's dresses, with their long songket skirts and their covered heads. The tambourine, as in many Arab countries, is also the instrument used in many Minangkabau festivities.

Minangkabau (West Sumatra) has its own unique culture. It is based on a matrilineal society, where the women own the inheritance of the land, and also where children inherit their tribal name from their mother's side of the family. To accommodate both the Islamic and traditional law, the paternal wealth is distributed according to Islamic law, whilst the ancestral inheritance is distributed amongst the female descendants.

The traditional arts and crafts of Minangkabau are also ingrained in the Minangkabau dwellings. The art work is intricate, eye catching and brightly coloured. The attention to detail is remarkable and gives each house character and makes it unique. The government is eager to preserve these crafts and encourage the people to build and develop traditional houses of their own.

Each Indonesian region has its own distinct and unique traditions. In addition to promoting west Sumatra culture the Indonesian embassy is also fostering interest in other provinces of Indonesia. In July the Embassy presented "Bali experience", a celebration of native arts and crafts from Bali. A wide range of products from textiles to furniture were exhibited at the Commonwealth Institute in London on 26-29 July 1995. In September, the Embassy hosted a cultural show from East Jawa and in November from Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia.

It is through this diverse and multifaceted culture that Indonesia hopes to project its kaleidoscopic image and enhance the understanding of its traditions and aspirations.

5TH INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON ISLAMIC ARTS
Mafraq (Jordan): 19-24 April 1996

JOINTLY ORGANISED BY

ISLAMIC ARTS FOUNDATION, LONDON (UK), AND
AL AL-BAYT UNIVERSITY, MAFRAQ (JORDAN)

ON THE THEME:

'ISLAMIC ARTS RESOURCES IN CENTRAL & EASTERN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA'

The 5th in the series of international seminars on various aspects of Islamic arts, organised by the Islamic Arts Foundation, London, will be held from 19-24 April 1996, on the campus of Al al-Bayt University in Mafraq (Jordan). It is being jointly organised by the Foundation and the University, and is co-sponsored by a number of academic and research institutions including the following:

- UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), Paris;
- IUOAS (International Union of Oriental and Asian Studies), Paris;
- ISESCO (Islamic Education, Science and Culture Organisation), Rabat;
- Royal Society of Fine Arts, Amman;
- Oxford Centre of Islamic Studies, Oxford;
- Aga Khan Trust for Culture, Geneva;
- Institute of Islamic Civilisation, Moscow;
- Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest;
- World of Islam Festival Trust, London;

and a number of other academic and research institutions.

COUNTRIES

The countries covered include Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan; Belarus; Bosnia-Herzegovina; Bulgaria; Croatia; Czech Republic; Georgia; Hungary;Kazakhstan; Kyrgyzstan; Macedonia; Poland; Romania; Russia and the Russian Federation [Bashkortostan Republic; Chechen Republic-Ischkeria; Dagestan Republic; Ingush Republic-Ingushtia; Kabardino-Balkar Republic; Tatarstan Republic; Astrakhan Region]; Slovakia; Slovenia; Tajikistan; Turkmenistan; Ukraine; Uzbekistan; and Yugoslavia.

PARTICIPANTS

Participants include art historians, museum curators, researchers, teachers, specialists and practitioners in various fields of performing and plastic arts and crafts, on aspects of their special interest and study concerning the above and / or related countries and regions.

The Foundation's earlier four seminars on various themes were held in 1982, 1985, 1988 and 1991. The main aim of the 5th Seminar is to document, analyse and evaluate Islamic arts resources in various fields including architecture, painting, calligraphy, music, crafts and related disciplines in plastic and performing arts, in an area of the world where these do not appear to have received fuller international academic and professional attention for the best part of the 20th century in view of the then prevailing conditions there.

PROCEEDINGS

The Seminar proceedings, along with the text of the papers, will be published in a special volume, copies of which may be ordered from Al al-Bayt University, Mafraq, or from the Islamic Arts Foundation in London.

SEMINAR SECRETARIAT

A Seminar Secretariat is functioning at the Higher Institute of Islamic Architecture and Arts, Al al-Bayt University, Mafraq (Jordan) - Fax 9626-871108. A Seminar Committee has been set up to coordinate at a central point all the various administrative, financial, protocol and operational aspects of the Seminar. Its Co-Chairs are the President of Al al-Bayt University, Prof Dr Adnan Al-Bakhit, and Chairman of the Islamic Arts Foundation, Mr Muazzam Ali. The Seminar Director is HRH Princess Dr Wijdan Ali, President of the Royal Society of Fine Arts, Amman.

STAY

Al al-Bayt University, as host of the Seminar, is providing full board and lodging facilities to about 60 participants from abroad, and about 30-40 participants from Jordan itself, along with local transportation facilities.

POST-SEMINAR TRIPS

A post-Seminar trip to some of the following places is also planned: Um al-Jimal; Jerash; Qusair Amra; Harranah Castle; Um al-Qais; Ajloun Castle.

FURTHER DETAILS

For further details, please fax or write to the Seminar Director at the Seminar Secretariat (Al al-Bayt University, Mafraq, Jordan. Phone +9626-871108; Fax +9626-871108).

In London, communications may be addressed to the Director General, Islamic Arts Foundation, 144-146 King's Cross Road, London WC1X 9DH.
Phone + 44 171-833 8275; Fax + 44 171-278 4797.

Impressions of Jakarta 1995

WIJDAN ALI

A metropolis of 12 million people, high-rise buildings and impossible traffic jams sound very much like New York. However, the gentleness of the people, their genuine politeness and hospitality immediately puts one back into the right place and perspective which is Jakarta. Being my first visit to Indonesia, I went there with a blank memory. At my departure there were too many images jostling to get into my consciousness about the place and especially its art.

To arrange three simultaneous exhibitions for the occasion of the meetings of the Non-Aligned countries is no small feat. To start with, I consider it a great achievement to involve culture with politics. To invite artists and art critics from almost every non-aligned country to meet, exchange views and establish contacts is an event that rarely takes place in any country today.

Consequently, the Exhibition of Contemporary Art of the Non-Aligned Countries 1995, held at the National Gallery was not only a conglomeration of works of modern artists from 41 countries covering Asia, Africa, South America and Australia, but an eye opener towards new trends and current cultures. Before my visit to Jakarta I had never seen art works from Myanmar, Madagascar, Vietnam, North Korea, Peru, Thailand, Croatia and Papua New Guinea. One cannot help saying that this major exhibition was an excellent means of art education.

The works that I found most impressive as a group were from Cuba, followed by those from Chile and Croatia. Some of the installations, in particular those from Indonesia and South America were very interesting. However, if there were written explanations next to these, one could simultaneously enjoy their cerebral and aesthetic qualities. The only snag was the disparity in the standard of the exhibited works. There were a few paintings that did not belong at the show. Yet, it is understandable considering that the choice of works was done by the respective governments and not the curators of the exhibition who had put a lot of thought in the hanging and distribution of the works. They cleverly grouped them in five sections according to themes and not countries; and although at times the works appeared to overlap from one section to the other, their grouping managed to give them a semblance of unity which is not easy with such a numerous and varied lot.

The second exhibition was Contemporary Balinese Art held at the National Museum. It included old as well as new sculptures and paintings from Bali. Some of the early works were by anonymous artists while the current ones showed a distinct trend relating to the island and tying up with the local culture while making use of contemporary techniques and media. The opening was enhanced by a performance of Balinese dance and music.

The third exhibition was of Contemporary Indonesian Art, held at Taman Ismail Marzuki. It included works by artists from different generations following various trends and disciplines. Some of the artists also had works in the exhibition of Contemporary Art of the Non-Aligned Countries. Some of the more impressive works were those of Pirous, Aceng Arif, Farida Srihadi, Erna Garnarsih Pirous, Nunung Sulebar, Iriantine Krnaya, Ivan Sagito and Astari Rasjid. On the whole, one could see in this exhibition a high standard of work and excellent curatorship.

The live installation at the entrance of the exhibition was the fruit of collaboration between Hendrawan Riyanto, Heri Dim, Harry Roesli Endo Suanda and Janis Somerville. It carried the title "Journey to the East and Pohaci Jero Begegic" and meshed dance, music, martial arts, with natural materials such as hay and bamboo. Although it had an explanation in Indonesian, the beauty of its set-up and sensitive execution made it accessible to all. I was amazed by the diversity of artistic trends among modern Indonesian artists, yet they are all united by a very clear identity either through subject-matter, colour, impression, or just a distinct feeling that communicates to the viewer where the work had come from.

There were 15 side exhibitions at private galleries which accompanied the three main events. Unfortunately, I could only go to two of them as there was no time left to see them all. It would have been wonderful had the organisers arranged a day to visit those exhibitions for us to get a greater exposure to Indonesian art or see the fabulous permanent collection at the National Gallery.

Last but not least there was a two-day seminar that brought speakers from India, the UK, USA, Australia, Jordan, Philippines, Singapore, Japan and Thailand. The two most interesting papers were by Mary Jane Jacob from the USA who dealt with the West's outlook towards art from the South, in an unusually frank manner, and Kuroda Raiji from Japan who spoke about new trends in Japanese contemporary art.

On the plane back to Jordan, I went through a mental flashback of my three days stay in Jakarta including the interesting people I had met and the different and various art works I had been exposed to: The Indonesian Minister of Culture and Education, Prof Dr Ing Wardiman Djojonegoro, is a well established nuclear scientist. He attended all the cultural events with his charming wife and showed genuine interest in the events and the guests. It is refreshing to meet a high official who combines culture and science. The graphics for the catalogues, posters and souvenirs pertaining to the exhibitions were excellent. The public attending the seminar sessions were well informed. Though one felt that there could have been some time for group discussion among the artists from different countries and time for sight-seeing and exploring the local art scene. After all such an occasion does not occur every day. The same problems face artists almost everywhere: how to ground art into the environment and culture, how far should artists delve into Western art, and how to reach a happy mix, a blend between the past, the present and the future. Is this possible? Maybe in Indonesia! I certainly would want to go back to Indonesia.

Moscow Conference on Islam & the Dialogue of Cultures

An International Conference on "Islam and Ethno-confessional Mutual Understanding in the Changing World" met in Moscow (26-28 May 1995). Among several working sessions, one was devoted specifically to "Art and Islam". The account that follows is based on reports by the Director of the Moscow Institute of Islamic Civilization, Dr Said Kiamilev (about the Conference itself), and by two art historians, Dr Tatiana Starodoub and Dr Mais Nazarli (about the session on "Art and Islam"). A list of the participating institutions appears on pages 150-151.







The Conference was convened under the aegis of UNESCO as part of its comprehensive project "**Dialogue of Cultures**" and other UNESCO activities in the framework of 1995 as the United Nations Year for Tolerance. The initiative for it came from the Muslim Board for Central European Russia, the Russian Academy of Sciences, the Moscow Institute of Islamic Civilization, and the Asia Muslim Committee of the International Islamic Charitable Organization, Kuwait, as financial sponsors along with the Islam World League. Travel grants for some of the scholars from Europe, America and the Central Asian Region were provided by HH the Aga Khan Secretariat in Aiglemont; and the Aga Khan Award for Architecture in Geneva brought to Moscow an impressive exhibition on Muslim Architecture.

Timed to coincide with the jubilee celebrations of the 90th anniversary of the Central Mosque in Moscow, the Conference discussed the contemporary problems of Muslim nations in their inter-relations with other peoples, picking up the threads of the earlier Conference of 1992 convened on the initiative of the Institute of Islamic Civilization, Moscow, on the theme: "Islam and the Problem of Interaction between Civilizations".

In keeping with its initiators' concept, the Conference aimed at a joint research by experts for the best possible solutions to topical issues concerning good neighbourly relations, mutual understanding and civil agreement in multi-ethnic and multi-confessional communities on the whole and, in particular, in those where Muslims comprise a majority of the population or where they are an ethno-confessional minority. The participants included researchers and cultural, political and community activists from a number of countries, and members of the Muslim, Christian, Jewish and other clergy.

The participants deemed it of great importance that Moscow was chosen as the venue for the debates on such vital issues as ethno-confessional mutual understanding and the role

of Islam in this understanding. This choice was very apt as Muslims account for a considerable proportion of Russia's population, and Muslim countries frame Russia on the south in a half moon. The Russian capital has a large Muslim community and major Muslim centres.

The communications presented at the Conference and the discussions that followed, confirmed:

- the growing realisation of the importance of a dialogue of cultures between various ethnoses and religions, and the openness of Islam to understanding between civilizations;
- the diversity of forms which this Dialogue of Cultures assumes and which vary from country to country;
- the abundance of problems arising on the road to ethno-confessional mutual understanding due to an inadequate knowledge of each other's history, culture and mode of life;
- the unique significance of this Dialogue of Cultures for such countries as Russia, where Islam plays a traditionally important role; and
- the utter lack of grounds for attempts to present current ethnic and political conflicts solely on the plane of confrontation between religions.

The participants paid attention to issues on whose solution further inter-ethnic understanding and national destinies depend. Everyone can contribute to the noble cause of their positive solution, the pride of place belonging to scholarly research, because genuine scholarly knowledge alone can provide optimal conditions to reduce ethnic and religious tensions and achieve agreement on the basis of spiritual values shared by all nations and religions. The Conference also deemed it necessary to elaborate a programme for further studies and measures for organizational research. In particular the participants thought it very useful to arrange expert discussions on the following aspects:

- specific features of Islamic and Russian civilizations and the role of Islam in Russia;
- Islam and Christian orthodoxy; and
- issues of contemporary Islamic movements at the national and international levels.

Furthermore, the Conference saw the implementation of the project "Islam in the Territory of the former Russian Empire" as one of the pivotal tasks of the international research community. This project owes its theoretical and practical importance mainly to the fact that Russians and foreigners alike had, for a long time, no access to reliable information about Islam in the USSR.

The Conference also deemed it necessary:

- to support the idea for the establishment of a Russian Association for Inter-Religious Harmony, which will admit as members both the clergy and the laity of various religions and confessions; and practical organization of inter-confessional dialogues in diverse forms will be the basic goal of this Association;
- to extend the curricula of theological educational establishments with disciplines and lecture cycles which would form ethno-confessional tolerance in the future clergy; and
- to publish functional study books and audio-visual aids for studies of Islam and foreign countries in non-Muslim theological and secular educational institutions.

The participants expressed heartfelt gratitude to the top Russian authorities and the Moscow municipal administration for their hospitality which, in particular, was expressed in the Mayor's office being offered as the venue for the celebrations of the 90th anniversary of the Moscow Central Mosque, and for the Conference opening ceremony. The Federal Presidential staff, the Russian parliamentary offices, the Federal Government, the Moscow City Council and other official structures sent letters of greetings to the Conference in which was reflected their sincere desire to strengthen the atmosphere of ethno-confessional agreement and cooperation.

Characteristically, similar ideas permeated letters to the Conference from the President of Egypt, the Great Sheikh al-Azhar, and other important persons, and state, public and research structures.

The participants expressed special gratitude to UNESCO for its research and methodological assistance during the Conference preparations, and for the active participation in its work by one of the Director General's Special Advisers, Mr Ehsan Naraghi; and personally to the Director General, Mr Federico Mayor, for his message to the Conference. They emphasised their solidarity with one of the pivotal ideas of the message, that Islam may not be limited to its religious dimension alone, as it represents a global vision, a culture and an ethic. This premise held the key to an understanding of the place and the role of Islam as a great civilising phenomenon.

The representatives of UNESCO informed the participants about various initiatives of the Organization concerning, among others, the dialogue of Islamic civilizations; and in this respect the Conference proposed to the Director General, in the spirit of his ideas of peace and of tolerance, a special project "Dialogue of Cultures" within the framework of UNESCO's next Six-Year Medium-Term Plan.

Session on "Art & Islam"

One of the specialised sessions of the Moscow Conference was devoted to "Arts & Islam". The theoretical basis for this work was formed from a concept worked out by Dr Mais J Nazarli and Dr Tatiana Kh. Starodoub, who also report on this session's deliberations.

The term 'Muslim Art' has never been clearly defined. It is used to refer not only to religious art proper, but to all other types of artistic creativity, including folk art in Islamic countries.

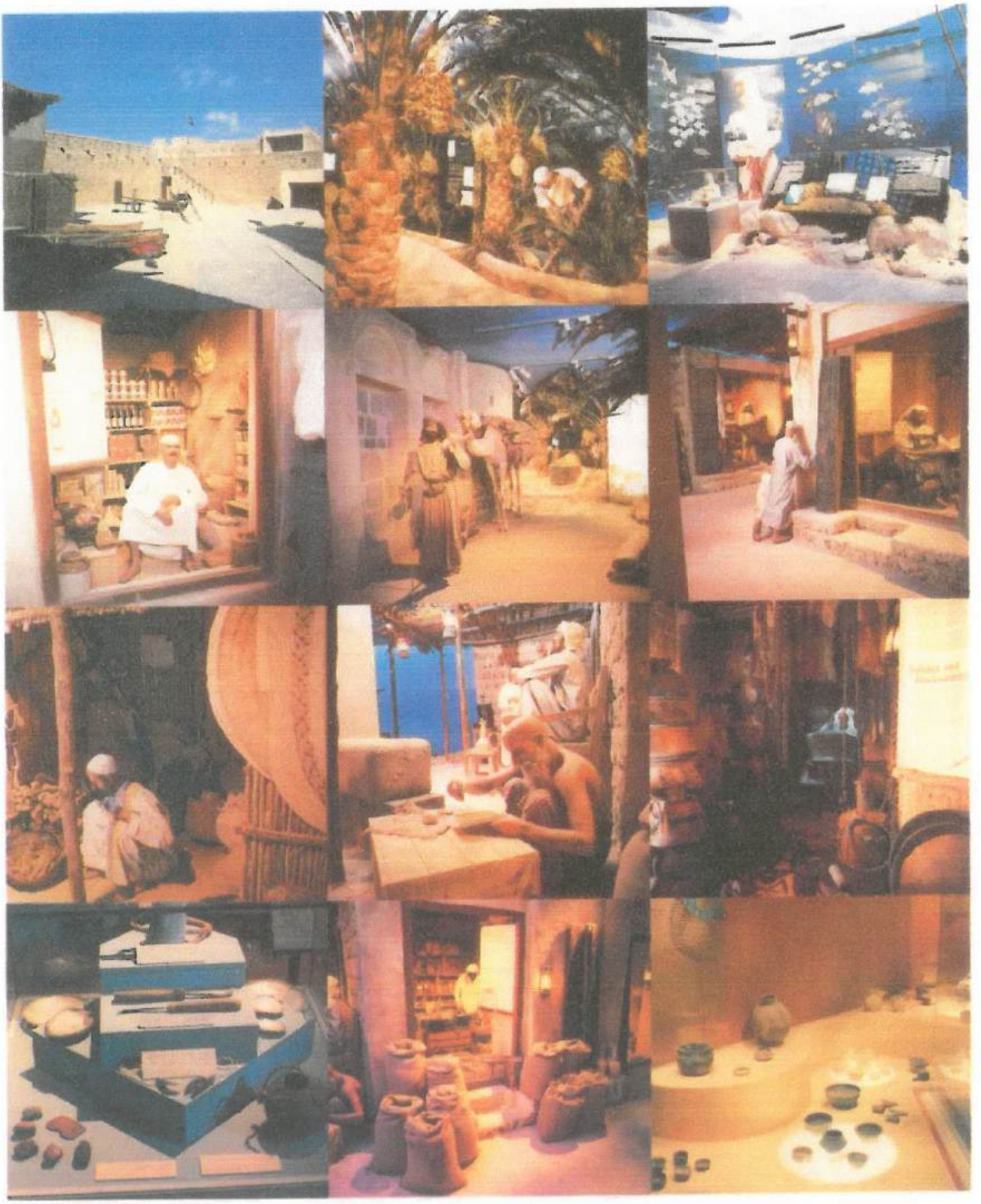
Considering the need to bring an integrated understanding of Muslim culture to the rest of the world, fundamental research is necessary in the history and theory of Muslim art, its terminology, causality, topology and its comprehension by Muslim theologians, philosophers, historians and artists. The most important of these is clearly the study of Muslim art as a phenomenon of Islamic civilization.

The theoretical description 'native-alien' implies two aspects of research into historical and contemporary developments:

a) the interaction of Muslim art with that of another religion within the

Dubai's Museum for the People

STEVE SIMON



The marvellous new displays of the Dubai Museum in their new subterranean building and in the newly restored buildings of the old fort have been designed to be enjoyed by local and overseas visitors alike.

The Museum is a live celebration of the ancient history, heritage and culture of Dubai. The artefacts of the collections, from 3000BC to the 20th Century are used to explain the life of the people rather than as a lifeless display of objects.

Dubai Municipality, who sponsored the whole project, appointed Event Heritage Consortium to carry out the design and project management of the interior displays. The Historic Buildings and Exhibitions Section of the Municipality, carried out the restoration of the Fort and the construction of the souk and town within the Museum. There is a strong focus on the desire of the community to have a better understanding of the life of Dubai before the oil explorations or the 1950s. The Dubai Museum was enthusiastic that the existing collections should be conserved and presented so that the cultural significance and technical craftsmanship of the made objects were projected.

The Museum is housed as before in the Fahaidi Fort - Dubai's oldest building - but has been increased in size by a clever new wing positioned below ground and entered through one of the Fort's original towers. This has given a twofold advantage in that the view of the Fort from the outside is not impeded and at the same time the additional area has enabled the creation of a thoroughly contemporary section of displays. There is a wonderful transition as visitors walk from the heat and dust of the courtyard with its barasti (palm frond) house to the downward spiral of cool air conditioned modern Dubai.

The displays within the original fort are designed to allow visitors to appreciate fully the Fort's architecture. Great care has been taken to ensure that mechanical and electrical services do not impact of the interior spaces. All the air handling equipment and general lighting has been housed in specially designed showcases thus leaving the building as it was originally constructed. These frameless showcases allow the objects within them to have maximum impact. The displays and information panels here describe the history of the Fort and Dubai's defensive architecture in general. They show examples of weaponry from the Museum's collection. Bank projected on the wall of a wing of the Fort is a specially commissioned film depicting traditional dances and songs, which have their roots in warfare.

When they enter the tower at the far corner of the Fort, visitors walk down a rampway around a model of Dubai Creek as it was five centuries ago. The sounds of the sea wash over them. They view a series of water colour pictures that are the only remaining visual references of Dubai's simple beginnings.

In marked contrast the second gallery is a fast moving audio visual celebration of the Emirate's meteoric rise to the financial and trading centre that it is today. Archival and newly commissioned film combine with aerial views of the Creek and allow visitors to see before them the physical development of the city. Briefed with this overview visitors begin a journey through space and time.

As they move on they are aboard a dhow in the Dubai of 1950. They disembark into the busy waterside souk. State of the art communications, hardware and software are combine to evoke the commerce and work shops of the day. To make the presentation as authentic as possible, the exhibition designers captured on film some of the last street craftsmen now working in Dubai. In several instances, the films are projected, with figures at full size, to give the impression that the craftsmen are really working at the back of the shop. They have been transposed into the past to become exhibits in their own lifetime. Sounds, smells and lighting create an atmosphere that is quite moving, especially for those who have lived through these early days. The building construction techniques and materials are all as they were used to make the original Dubai souk and were developed by the Dubai Municipality restoration team. Wherever possible the items on display are original. Where this was not possible, facsimiles have been faithfully reproduced.

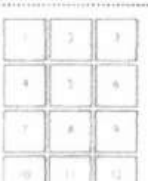
The buildings of the two are expanded by the inclusion of a traditional mosque and a house complete with windtower. Visitors hear the call to prayer (Adhan) as they peer through the window of the mosque to see boys learning the Koran. An indication of the authenticity of the sound recording is illustrated by an incident when the sound was being programmed on site. On hearing the call to prayer, some workers in the museum stopped work and were about to go to the mosque before realising it was the wrong time of day for prayer.

Immediately adjacent to the souk are three galleries that deal with life in the desert. The first deals with the 'Desert by Day' and includes a major display on the cultivation of date palm and its products. Films on camel racing and falconry, the traditional sports of the Gulf, are shown against a backdrop of the desert, while the sound of the water flowing in a working falaj (water channel) adds to the ambience. The second area shows how the animals and the plants of the desert have adapted to life in this harsh environment where there is little water, and also informs on how man copes with life in the desert. Displays using electrosensitive glass provide simple interaction to show detailed habitats. The third of these galleries explores the 'Desert at Night' and includes important displays of the nomadic life of the Bedu. In addition, large showcases display the animals of the desert using prepared specimens and interactive technology. Laser disks drive three interactive computer screens that allow visitors to select the animal they wish to learn more about. Sound plays a major part in this gallery and the unprogrammed combinations of animal and human sounds provides a unique experience for each and every visitor.

The Bedu have natural affinity with the elements. In the Navigation Gallery their ability to find their way by reference to the stars and sun is explained. The instrument they used are displayed.

The greatest part of the museum displays are in the underground section. Only at one place does the world above become apparent. This is the central and largest gallery - the Mariners of the Gulf. The gallery sits below a blue glass ceiling which inspired the designers to conceptualise the space as below the surface of the sea. Fishing boats float above visitors heads, as pearl divers enter the water in search of

continued on page 110



Captions to Photographs on page 97

1 Courtyard of the Al Fahaidi Fort
2 The oasis
3 A view of the 'Manners of the Gulf' gallery
4 The food shop
5 A man leads his camel into town
6 A corner of the souk
7 The palm frond craft shop
8 The Bookbinder at work near the coffee shop
9 The blacksmith's shop
10 Showcase displaying pearl diving equipment
11 The herb and spice shop
12 Showcase showing a wealth of archaeological finds

Copyright Event Heritage Consortium. May 1995.

Muslim world (e.g Coptic, Zoroastrian, Manichaean, Judaic, Buddhistic); and

b) the interaction of Muslim artistic creativity with that of representatives of other cultures and religions outside the Muslim world.

Of special interest is the multi-ethnical nature of Muslim art and of the formative basis of its styles. Russia, with its multi-national and polyconfessional population, sees Muslim culture both as neighbouring and as native and, in this sense, provides a unique laboratory, as it were, for research into the above two aspects of Muslim art.

The merit of the section's work at the conference was a new rapprochement of Islamic art and historical studies, two subjects which have scarcely before come into contact. It showed that it was possible to unite the scholarly interests of various specialists - those concerned with art, music, theatre, folklore, etc. - all of whom are engaged in studies of artistic processes in the Muslim context.

There were eighteen scholars representing research centres of different cities and countries - Russia (Moscow, Saint Petersburg, Kazan), Tajikistan (Dushanbe), Great Britain (London) and Saudi Arabia (Madinah). Among the participants were doctors of history and art history, fellows of research institutes and museums, editors of specialized periodicals dealing with Islamic research, architects and university professors.

The speakers covered a wide range of subjects, from various aspects of historical development to the present condition of art in the Muslim world. Almost every report was followed by a lively discussion.

Dr Anna Suvorova (Moscow, Research Institute of Oriental Studies), in her report "Dar al Bustan in Subcontinental Culture: Reality and Tradition", demonstrated a Sufic concept of Indian Muslim palatial architecture of the 16th-17th centuries. She said that the traditional complex of Muslim architecture in South Asia which may be described as 'palace-garden' (*dar al-bustan*) originated from the mythological image of the earthly paradise (*firdos e-barin*). This image was highly elaborated by Sufi tradition, which gave a symbolic meaning to the opposition of the palace and the garden.

The palace-garden is an important form in the concept of Paradise. It is an enclosure planted with trees and flowers and surrounding a central pavilion. The whole becomes a mandala, providing both centrifugal movement outward into the garden of nature and a centripetal movement inward to a pond and fountain as its spiritual centre. Space encloses the hidden treasure of the house as the body encloses the soul which hides the spirit in the human being. The interaction of shape and surface must create a space devoid of tension and contradictions.

This Sufi concept has been expressed in architecture since the time of the Delhi Sultanate. One of the best examples is the palace complex of Navabi Lucknow and the fort complex of Macchi Bhavan. The fort complex reveals the idea of *dar al-bustan* as both earthly and symbolic space. The same concept became the *locus communis* of various forms of Muslim literature in the subcontinent, including Indo-Persian, Urdu, Panjabi, Sindhi and other narrative forms.

Dr. Irina I. Sheptunova (Moscow, State Museum of Oriental Art), in her report "Indo-Islamic Synthesis: A Change of Cultural Paradigm", analysing Indian palatial and fortress architecture, showed that the encounter of two traditions, the classic culture of mediaeval India and that of Islam, occurred at that moment when, independently of each other, each had undergone a long period of development. Classic Indian culture had lasted then for more than two thousand years; the art, literature and philosophy of Islam were no less than 500 years old and had reached, by the time of the conquest of the North Indian principedoms, their heyday. The clash and interpenetration of the two artistic systems led to the emergence of a new culture, which became known as the Indo-Islamic synthesis.

In Indian architecture, this synthesis manifested itself in the rise of powerful fortifications, in the alteration of the spatial layout of temples and in the emergence of a new cult form - the mausoleum with an adjacent garden. This ensemble occupies a special place in the architecture of the Moghul Empire. It is an image of the movement of the soul towards the sacred Centre. While performing this centripetal movement, one passes fences and gates which become more and more imposing as one nears the central piece of the ensemble.

India's position being east of Makkah, it was possible to preserve the traditional orientation of Muslim buildings with the entrance on the east side. At the same time, the spatial layout of architecture underwent crucial changes. The traditional "corporeality" of Hindu temples gave way to a new expressiveness whose combination of planes and empty spaces presented a striking contrast to the former tradition. Garbhagriha, the dark cell, is the symbol of the sanctum sanctorum of a Hindu temple, its inner mystery being within its body, while the architecture of Islam presents the exact opposite of that: the emptiness of the Absolute is filled with divine substance of Light. Here the Light attains every possible form: the shimmering chiaroscuro of vaulted caverns with stalactites, the marble sheen of the mihrabs (niches), the polychromy of inlays and the lace of the tiny mirrors in the dark interiors of late Moghul architecture.

Dr Ahmed Farid Moustafa from Medina, Saudi Arabia, emphasised the dependence of all Muslim art forms on their utilitarian purpose. He believed that abstract art as such is not truly Muslim and pointed out that the majority of artistic achievements in Islamic countries had a utilitarian purpose. The Quranic concept of beauty makes beauty functional as a category of Muslim aesthetics. It satisfies the needs and interests of the people rather than those of the elite. Dr Moustafa's presentation summed up the discussion on Muslim architecture.

The next speakers presented aspects of the history of the visual arts in Muslim countries. Dr Larisa N Dodkhoudoyeva (Dushanbe Institute for World Economics and International Relations), in "Central Asia and Indian Art: Sources and Metamorphoses", expressed the thesis that by the time of its Islamisation, India has already had centuries of cultural rapprochement with Central Asia. In her opinion, the art of the Islamic period in both regions originated not in Muslim ideas and aesthetics, but rather in their own respective cultural traditions. To support this view, Dr Dodkhoudoyeva compared some samples from the mediaeval Indian and Central Asian miniatures and poems.

Dr Mais J Nazarli (Moscow, The Oriental Institute of the Russian State University for the Humanities), in his paper "The Infallibility of the Safavids as Reflected in Tabriz Book Illuminations of the 16th Century", spoke of the panegirical functions of Muslim court miniatures. One of the chief concerns of the Safavids had always been to establish the legitimacy of their power. They were virtually the first ruling dynasty of the Shi'ites. To claim power, the Safavids

had, according to Shi'ite rules, to possess *'isma* (infallibility), which meant combining the qualities of *isnad* (continuity) and *nass* (predestination or unambiguous commandment). Many researchers have thought that the Safavids continued to have doubts about the legitimacy of their rule as Imams and therefore tried to strengthen their power by assuming two more important attributes of authority. Regarding Ismail's role as the Mahdi, great emphasis was laid on his status as a spiritual teacher of the Sufi Order of Safaviyya and he was considered to be "the shadow of Allah on earth", a modernised version of the old Iranian concept of the Divine Right to power.

All these attributes were reflected, Dr Nazarli said, in the Tabriz book illuminations of the 16th century, where the Safavid monarchs were depicted in the guise of the legendary rulers of old. Such illustrations were of enormous import in substantiating the mystical succession of the Safavids. The parallels between the doings of the old Persian rulers and the Safavids in similar circumstances were also significant as showing that the two had much in common. The accentuated harmony of the world of Tabriz book illuminations of the 16th century conformed well to the Shi'ite concept of the ideal world that would emerge when the Hidden Imam made his appearance. The most important thing of all was that the composition of the miniatures clearly revealed the "Light of Muhammad" in the Safavid ruler. The ruler was therefore the "Universal Man". Thus the art of book illumination held a prominent place in the substantiation of the Safavids' "infallibility", or the legitimacy of the rule of one of the greatest dynasties in Iranian history.

Dr Tatiana Kh.Starodoub (Moscow, Research Institute of the Theory and History of Art of the Russian Academy of Fine Arts) presented a paper on "The Subject of the City in Mediaeval Visual Art of the Muslim East". The representation of the city is rare in the art of the Arabic Caliphate and the following feudal states, perhaps because of the visual interpretation of sacred meaning which the mediaeval conscience used to give to the image of the city. In the absence of a canon of iconography in Islam, it produced certain difficulties for Muslim artists.

Some attempts were made, however, and we can distinguish several metaphoric interpretations, such as the "the Face of God", (mosaic landscapes in the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus); "Sign of God" (The Angel Jibril gives the model of the city to the Prophet Muhammad",a miniature in the Topkapi museum); a hint of a hidden treasure in an impregnable citadel that must be taken by storm, referring to the Sufi beginner overcoming the trial at the end of the first stage of his initiation. Ottoman city landscapes, uniting topographic features and panoramas, were built as symbols of the excellently organised state, whose creator and personification was the Sultan, "the shadow of God on earth".

Mr Jalal Uddin Ahmad, the executive editor of Arts and the Islamic World, described the activities of the Islamic Arts Foundation, the international trust which publishes this quarterly magazine. He spoke of the complexities of interpreting Islamic art and the research that formed the basis for the study of this form of artistic expression. Mr Ahmad invited the participants to a seminar which was to take place in the spring of 1996 and which would be devoted to Islamic arts resources in Eastern and Central Europe, and "Central Asia." He concluded by complimenting the participants on their stimulating discussions, which he said would catalyse much new thinking and create dialogues in diverse fields of Muslim art.

Dr Michail Rodionov (Saint Petersburg, KunstKamera Museum), in his report, "Kazan Popular Prints in Petersburg Concerning Sacred Space Interpretation", raised interesting questions about the comprehension of artistic space in Muslim cult graphics, the formation of the conscious or unconscious idea of this imaginary space, its roots, its general characteristics and its local peculiarities. As the object of his research, he chose one of the examples of a Kazan popular print made in Saint Petersburg at the beginning of the 20th century for the local Tartar Muslim community.

Lilia I Sattarova (Kazan State Architectural Academy) spoke on "The Characteristics of Plastic Treatment of Seljuk Konya Porches." This aspect of

continued on page 150

Message from the Director General of UNESCO

At the opening of your Conference, it gives me great pleasure to send you a message of warm support. I congratulate the organisers on the initiative they have taken to address a problem of growing importance. Islam cannot be reduced to its religious dimension alone; it represents a global vision, a culture and an ethic.

When one analyses the events – sometimes tragic – that have convulsed Muslim communities in recent decades, one finds that they correspond to manifestations of violence, physical or moral, veiled or open, to which these communities have themselves been subjected. Apart from these occasional clashes, Islam, like all the great monotheist religions, has been a school of love, justice and peace. It has moreover engendered a universal civilisation.

For centuries, humanity lived with diverse systems of thought and belief, in communities separated at once by geography and history. Modern technological developments have suddenly brought men and women closer together, without their having the opportunity to truly understand their differences as a source of intellectual enrichment. This comprehension today gives rise to many frustrations and to pointless – if sometimes dramatic – confrontations.

Conscious of the importance of this issue, UNESCO proposed to the United Nations that 1995 should be proclaimed the Year of Tolerance – which gives an added significance to your Conference. If I were to enumerate the conditions for détente, peace and happiness in the century to come, I would certainly start by mentioning tolerance. We must redouble our efforts to build bridges between religions and cultures. I am sure that all of you gathered here today in Moscow are convinced of this need. I wish you, as true militants in the cause of peace, every success in your work.

Federico Mayor

piece of creative art towards a project of national and an international programme was truly unique and rewarding," says Ms Behnam. "I believe that the Mughal Tent is also a symbol of migration for women. It represents the nomadic life that so many of us have led."

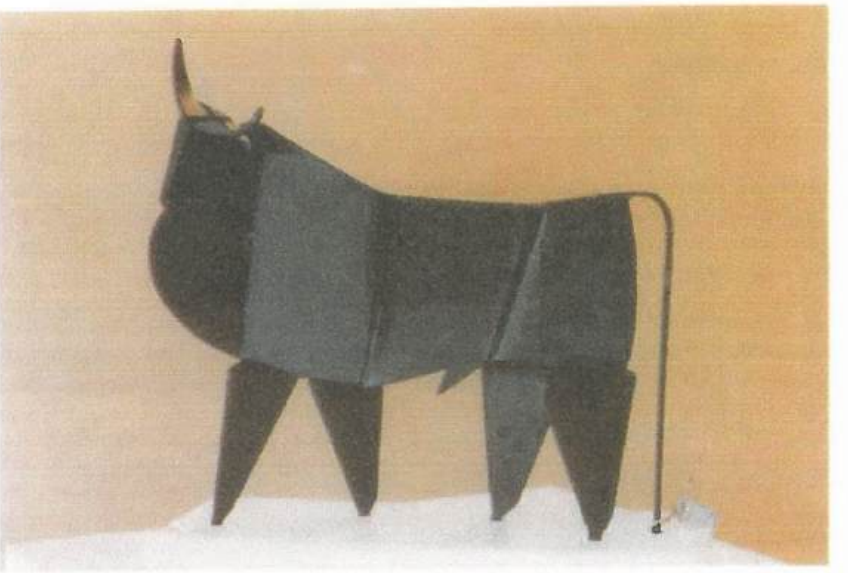
The main features of the Dubai panel include: a circular medallion at the top executed in beadwork has Arabic calligraphy which reads, "In the Name of Allah, the Compassionate, the Merciful". Then there is a traditional wind-tower (barjeel) house, followed by a large open door through which is a painted scene of modern Dubai with its skyscrapers and its famous Creek in front. At the base is an Arabian sailing vessel (dhow) set in a turquoise blue sea of silk, with a hand-crocheted net



swung over its side, and an oil rig on one corner.

"Our traditions are reflected in a round tray with a coffee (Kahwa) pot and dates on a carpet of 'Baluchi' design, hand-embroidered in colourful wool. There are date palms with real lacquered dates, an incense burner, a mould on which local women weave colourful braids that are used to embellish clothes, and an Arab couple in the national dress with the woman wearing a mask (Batala). Finally of course there is a camel worked in padded felt."

The completed panel was unveiled at a ceremony by Ms Diane Wilton, wife of the British Consul General at the Private Complex in Jumeirah and was







Left: Daughters of Kalash II by Sheikha Hessah. **Top:** Metallic sculpture by Hussein Madi. **Middle:** Magdalene Tayar and her mural at Forte Grand, Abu Dhabi. **Above:** Amna Dabbagh, Myla Atassi and Anne Russel (l-r) of the Green Art Gallery, Dubai. Opposite page, **top, left:** "Dubai – Open Door" Ms Mariam Behnam and her team working on the "Mughal Tent" panel. **Bottom:** "Hands" by Dia al Azzawi. **Extreme right:** 2 Violins in Green by Hala Nadar.

UAE Newsletter

MALIK A OMER

An exhibition of charismatic and appealing portraits painted by Her Highness by Shaikha Hessah Maktoum Al Maktoum, held last April at The Crillon Hotel, Paris, was an invitation to explore a world that, like the Middle East, exploded with colour, hope and harmony.

Shaikha Hessah is the first born of HH Shaikh Maktoum Bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President and Prime Minister of the UAE, and Ruler of Dubai. Shaikha Hessah, 23, was educated in the Latifa School for Girls in Dubai where she studied art as a subject for her 'O' levels and later took the subject for 'A' levels. She took up art as a discipline in 1991 when she started lessons with Dubai-based artist Tina Ahmed.

The exhibition was inaugurated by H H Shaikh Ahmed Bin Saeed Al Maktoum, Chairman, Emirates Airline, and President of the Civil Aviation Department, Dubai, who said, "As the foremost representative of young women in Dubai and the United Arab Emirates, she is an admirable ambassador. Her art demonstrates a genuine awareness and concern for real issues and I believe she can make a powerful statement about the role of women in our society. I hope that you enjoy the exhibition, and join me in wishing her success. We look forward to many in the future."

Shaikha Hessah is deeply sensitive about women's issues; she has an all consuming love for children, and this is reflected in her paintings where women and children feature so largely. Some of her work has been donated to UNICEF.

Her early works focus on nature and the imagery of faces that ask for understanding and care. Lyrical phrases appended to each painting are used to describe each work.

In a portrait titled "Doorways of Hope", a mother and her children appear to be heading towards an open door and the artist comments: "Lead yourself through these doors to fulfil your lost dreams. Lend a helping hand and together let us break the barriers of selfishness, leave hopelessness behind and follow the stairway into lasting perseverance."

In yet another painting of gypsy women titled "Banjaran", Shaikha Hessah says: "Vivid tones of the east touch me, fascinate me; as do the mysteries of the gypsy and her kind. Where does she go.... where is she coming from?"

An old head on young shoulders? Is the collection overlaid with the pathos and pain she sees in the world around her? And yet, she asks, "How can it all be sad and painful when it is so colourful?"

Shaikha Hessah uses rice paper as canvas and mixes media like pastels, water-colours, and printing procedures, as she explores the frontiers of art, adding now and then, a hint of gold leaf for that baroque touch of the oriental masters. And yet she manages, from her current forays into calligraphy, to project an abstract modernism.

Shaikha Hessah, like her art, is the epitome of the UAE: traditional yet modern, drawing inner strength from the old values and looking outward for inspiration.

She had exhibited her work in a number of group exhibition in the UAE, and her work has been commissioned and reproduced on greeting cards for Al Aseef School (1992) and Emirates Airline (1993). Proceeds from both of these were donated to the handicapped. In addition, Shaikha Hessah has donated two paintings, 'The Plea' and 'Festivities' to UNICEF.

The exhibition in Paris, titled "Reflections" was sponsored by Dubai Commerce and Tourism Promotion Board and Emirates Airline.

Dubai - Open Door

A group of nine ladies, from eight different nationalities, based in Dubai, responded to an invitation from the Victoria & Albert Museum (V&A) in London, to join in the South Asia Arts Education Programme, to design and execute an embroidered tent-hanging for a giant tent project.

Popularly know as the 'Mughal Tent Project', the Nehru Gallery National Textile Project, was launched in December 1991 by Ms Shirin Akbar of the V&A Education Department. The project was established to encourage women from South Asia who live in Great Britain, to explore their own heritage through developing the traditional textile skill following visits to the Nehru Gallery at the V&A, for inspiration and study.

Shirin says, "The women involved in this project in the UK are of ages ranging from under 16 to over 60. For most of them this was the first visit to a museum and their first realisation that museum collections are 'theirs'. The project has re-awakened their traditional skills, released latent talents, introduced them to new techniques and unlocked rich and creative design abilities. Although the project was set up for Asians in Britain it has proved so popular that it has attracted groups from overseas including Los Angeles, Toronto, India, Bangladesh and Dubai."

Shirin Akbar (49), from Bangladesh, has spent more than half her life in Britain. "But the umbilical cord is still very much there," she says. "I share with many of the women their experiences of trying to put down new roots."

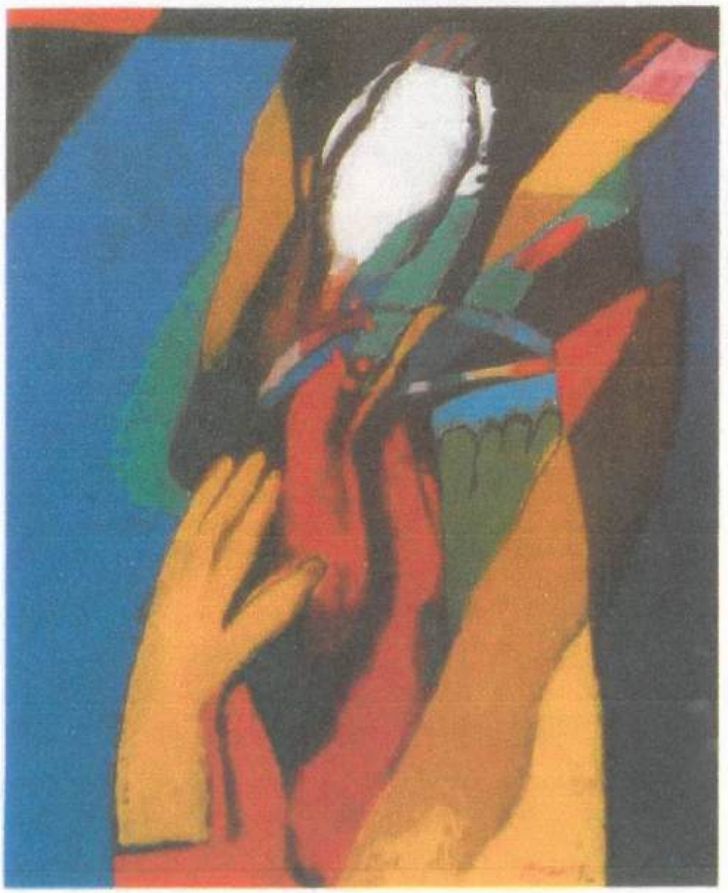
It was during one of her visits to London, that Ms Marian Behnam, a UAE national, renowned author and social worker, was invited by Shirin to view some of the panels of the Mughal Tent Project at the V&A. "I was most impressed not only by the exquisite hand-crafted panels, but also by the praiseworthy aim of the project. It was more than just sewing! I readily agreed to organise a panel to represent Dubai."

"We titled our panel: "Dubai - an Open Door" to emphasise the broad outlook of the Rulers of the United Arab Emirates, where so many nationalities live in perfect harmony and contribute to the economy of the country. The panel was designed by our well known artist Tina Ahmed, from Bangladesh, who resides in Dubai. We got together a group of talented ladies which, besides myself, included: Sultana Radia (UAE), Tina Ahmed (Bangladesh), Durriyah Vasi (Pakistan), Shaheen Hamza (India), Prue Mason (Australia), Jean Sawyer (Britain), and Ruth and Natalie Sadler (Ireland).

The Dubai panel conforms to the size and colour given by the V&A, and is worked on a red background - the imperial Mughal colour. The top has an outline of a Mughal cusped arch merging into a border framing the panel. The Dubai tapestry has its own unique local features, incorporating the heritage and traditions, and the developments that have taken place transforming the desert.

"We took almost a year to complete the painstaking details. The joy and satisfaction of working on a





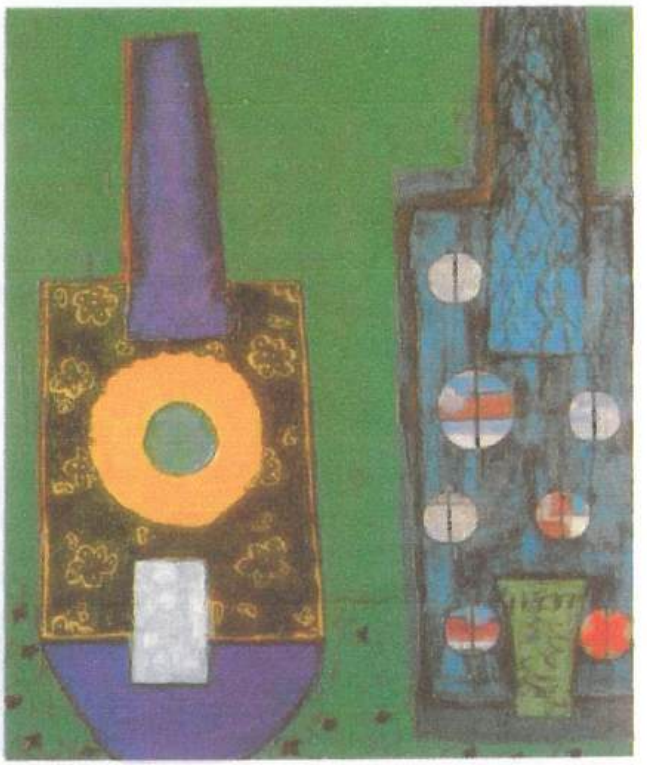
flown to London courtesy Emirates Airline. Ms Behnam handed it over personally to the Victoria & Albert Museum.

History in Ceramics

The largest ceramic mural of its kind in the Gulf was unveiled early this year at the Forte Grand Hotel in Abu Dhabi depicting the history of the capital before the discovery of oil, through to the present day.

The mural was the idea of Shaikh Nahyan bin Mubarak al Nahyan, the Minister for Higher Education and Scientific Research, and the owner of the Hotel. "It was quite a challenge," said Ms Magdalene Tayar (26), an arts graduate, who had designed and executed the impressive and colourful mural. "Shaikh Nahyan wanted a mural which depicted the development of Abu Dhabi over the years so that the hotel guests could see what Abu Dhabi had achieved."

The mural on the curved wall of the lobby shows a panoramic view of Abu Dhabi as viewed from



offshore along the Corniche with the Forte Grand occupying a prominent place. Starting from the left, the scene portrays the lifestyle of the Bedouins of yester-years, with their tents, gazelles and camels with falcons in flight, palm trees and the traditional 'dhows' along the waterfront. The Old Fort of Abu Dhabi dominates this section.

The scenes lead up to multi-storeyed structures of the early construction boom and then the new skyscrapers that now bear testimony to the city's prosperity. The Volcano Fountain and palm trees are also seen along the corniche, and included are the Maqta Bridge and the historical watch-tower as well. The entire mural in a matt finished glaze is indeed impressive and a first in the Gulf.

Magdalene was educated in England, did a foundation course in ceramics and then went on to acquire an Honours Degree from the Camberwell College of Art, London, specialising in Three

Dimensional Design in ceramics. "Ceramics is one of the oldest art forms and the most versatile medium," says Magdalene. "It can be functional, decorative, artistic and utilitarian. Everybody uses ceramics from sanitaryware to tableware. A canvas can only be two dimensional but ceramics can be made in three dimensional form, and even sculptures can be made in ceramics. There is now a revival of ceramics as an art form."

Daughter of an architect who has been working in Abu Dhabi, Magdalene says, "I have been coming to this city off and on since I was five years old. I have seen the tremendous changes that have taken place over the years and so it was not difficult for me to conceptualise the theme of the mural."

Magdalene was all praise for Sea Rock Marble Est, Abu Dhabi, and particularly Mr Sukhdev Singh, for putting together the 10,000-piece mural on the Lobby wall with an adhesive. "The mural took about 12 days to fix, averaging about 1,000 tiles a day. It was an amazing execution considering that it was their first time working on a project of this nature. I could not have hoped for better people to get the job done and on schedule."

Arabian Art Gallery

A new gallery in Dubai, called Green Art, was inaugurated in March this year by the Director General of the Dubai Economic Department, Mohammed Al Abbar, when the list of distinguished guests read like a who's who in Dubai's art world. The exhibition featured works of eight leading Arab artists.

The gallery is the brain child of two ladies, Mayla Atassi, a Syrian whose husband is an industrialist in Dubai, and Amna Dabbagh from Saudi Arabia, married to a UAE national who is a bank executive. The gallery is housed in a spacious villa in the elite suburb of Jumeirah, and was completely renovated with the latest in lighting techniques to highlight the works of the artists. Mayla says, "Although we had to obtain special permission to operate in a residential area, once we had put forward our case, the authorities were most helpful."

I asked Mayla about the name Green Art. "I have felt strongly about the aims of Greenpeace, and protection of the environment. In fact some years ago I was printing greeting cards in limited editions on recycled paper. That's the reason for choosing the name Green Art." Mayla also answered another query about the logo of the gallery, which was the shadow of a hand. "Artists use their hands to create – the hand signifies creation – giving and touching; through their art, artists communicate with the world."

Mayla is the managing partner of the gallery and although she has no formal training in art, she more than makes up for it with the vast experience she has gained over the years. She co-owns two art galleries in Syria with her sister Mona. The branches of Gallery Atassi in Damascus and Homs are renowned for their patronage by most of the leading Arab artists. The galleries also deal in Arabic literature and music. Amna has a Master's degree in Public Health and was with the Al Wasl hospital for a number of years. She was elated that her father, Mr Dabbagh, had come from Saudi Arabia especially for the inauguration of her Gallery. The two ladies are being assisted by their colleague Anne Russell.

The artists who displayed their paintings and sculptures at the Green Art Gallery represented eight countries and are nationally and internationally renowned. A number of them attached great importance to the event and had taken the trouble to be present for the opening. The artists included the following:

Abdul Qader Al Rais, one of the pioneering artist of the modern art movement in the UAE. A self-taught artists, he has won numerous awards at home and abroad. His water-colours and oils in an impressionistic style depicting the heritage of his country and his recent abstracts, some of which incorporate calligraphy, have been well received.

Dia Al Azzawi from Iraq studied heritage and archaeology in Baghdad and has consistently experimented with traditional idioms. He has used letters as symbols as essential parts of the formal pattern, which though abstract is always suggestive of a feeling, an expression or a totality. Colour is Dia's forte.

Hussein Madi from Lebanon studied in Rome and was Professor of Art at the University in Lebanon. He work in several mediums including oils, water colours, pastels and acrylic. Madi uses a bird as his symbol which appears in all his paintings.

Mona Saudi, born in Amman, Jordan, is a graduate of the Ecole des Beaux Art in Paris. She now has her home and studio in the village of Abdoun, where her studio is open to visitors once a week. Mona has created large-scale sculptures for public spaces in Jordan. One of her marble sculptures stands at the entrance to the Arab World Institute in Paris. Mona was present at the inauguration of the Green Art gallery.

Sami Mohammed from Kuwait exhibited his sculptures. He studied at the College of Art in Cairo followed by a few years in the USA. On his return he became fascinated by the local heritage – the Bedouin tent and rug. He exhibited also his two works 'Sabra' and 'Chatila'.

Kamal Boullata showed his pleasing graphics in lines and colours. Kamal lives in the US and has exhibited in galleries around the world.

Nazir Nabaa from Syria studied art in Cairo and Paris, and is one of the leading artists in his country. His subjects cover portraits, still life and landscapes.

Adil Riskhallah from Egypt uses water-colours in an expressionist style. He is influenced by Egyptian culture and his work have colour and abstraction in a pleasing ensemble. Adil was also present at the opening.

In the middle of May the Green Art Gallery held an exhibition of paintings by Lebanese born artist Hala Nadar who received First Class honours in 1991 for her degree in Printed Textiles, and had earlier completed a diploma course from Chelsea School of Art. Hala now lives in Dubai. She has exhibited her works in London, Frankfurt, and Stuggart.

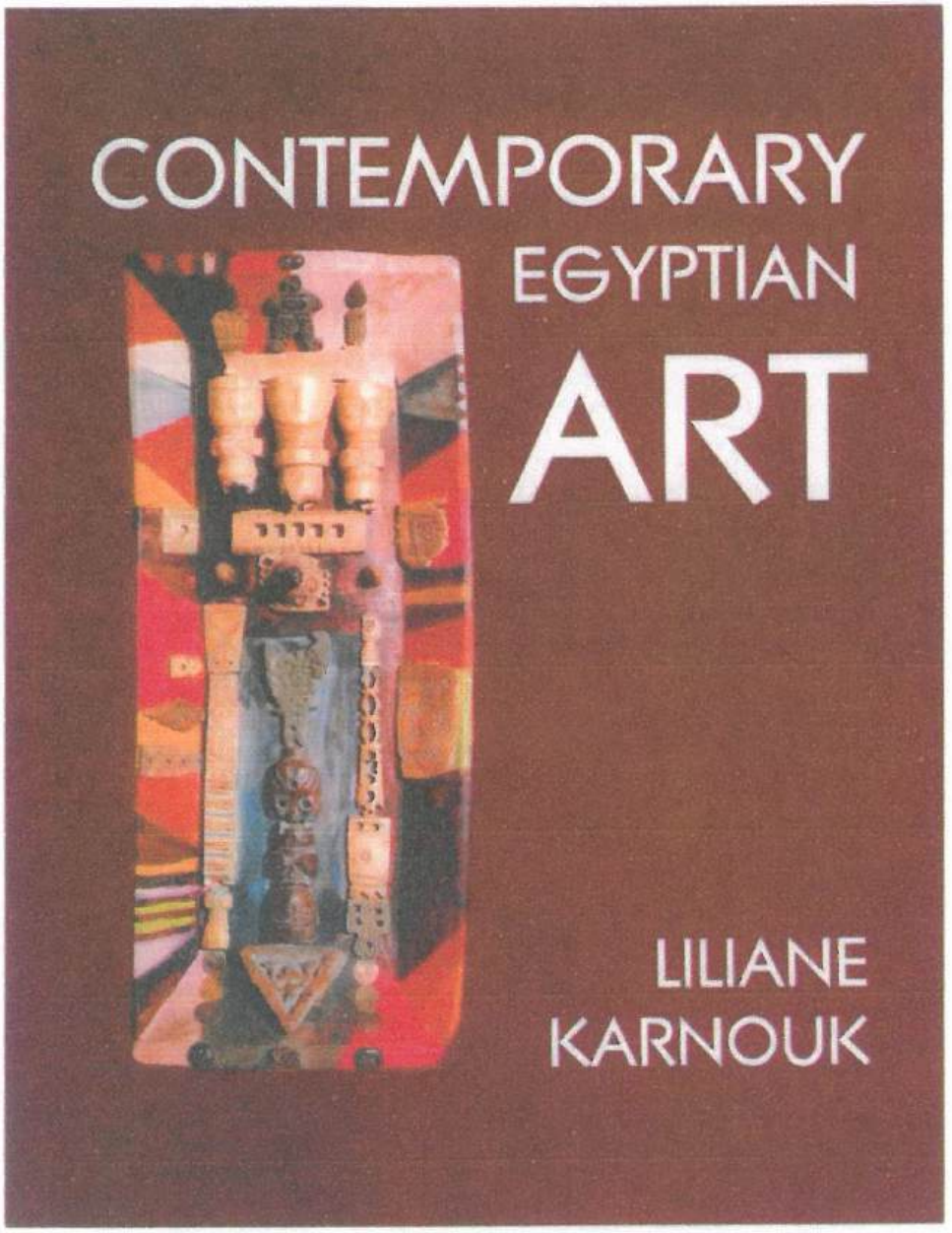
contents list

CONTENTS LIST of Issue Nos 1-25 of *Arts & The Islamic World* is available on request

KINDLY WRITE TO

CONTENTS LIST *Arts & The Islamic World*

144-146 KING'S CROSS ROAD LONDON WC1X 9DH TEL +44 171 833 8275 FAX +44 171 278 4797



The book is brought up to date with discussions of painters who are still in their twenties and thirties and are still trying to find new modes of work and new styles. Among these ambitious youngsters the temptation to try to please the crowd in order to win what are becoming real financial rewards is thoroughly present. A concluding attempt to distinguish true works of art from what she calls "kitsch" is not especially clear or convincing, but in her final pages Karnouk continues to issue many challenges. In the book as a whole she asks an important unresolved questions. "Is it possible," she inquires, "to dress the collectivist and religious easterner in the costume of the individual and Existentialist Westerner?" A question like that goes to the paradoxical heart of the very idea of modern art in Egypt.

Contemporary Egyptian Art by Lilian Karnouk, 132pp., 160 colour illustrations, has been published by American University in Cairo Press.

monochrome facsimile **(Stapled Copies)**

of back issues of
Arts & The Islamic World
are now available
@ £12.50 per issue plus p&p
Arts & The Islamic World
144-146 King's Cross Road · London WC1X 9DH
Telephone +44 171 833 8275 · Facsimile +44 171 278 4797

Contemporary Egyptian Art Surveyed

ELIZABETH RODENBECK

The first volume of Liliane Karnouk's work on modern Egyptian art was published in 1988 and covered the period from the beginning of the twentieth century up until the 1952 Revolution. The author focused on the work of nine outstanding painters who attempted to break away from the European academic tradition and acquire an Egyptian artistic identity. The Egyptian State had something to do with their fortunes, but patronage was still a private affair. In his preface the historian P J Vatiokiotis described the book as "bold and imaginative undertaking".

The new volume is larger and more ambitious in every way and its format and production do far better justice to the author and her subject matter. As the text requires, the coloured plates are multitudinous; and they have been intelligently placed adjacent to the relevant passages of commentary. Either to specialists and students who need a handy and authoritative compendium of reference material or to general readers who simply want to learn more about the twentieth-century Egyptian art world, this book will be indispensable.

Karnouk takes up her theme where she left off at the end of her first volume. Exploring the development of artists and their art during the past 40 years, she bravely grapples with those shifts in Egyptian political and social circumstances that have has repercussions in artistic production, effecting not only styles, techniques, and subject matter, but also the accepted criteria for evaluating it and judging failure or success. She traces the place of art in the Revolution - to which she refers, reflecting Egyptian colloquial Arabic usage, as "the *sawra*" - and examines the ups and downs of Egyptian artistic life during its first decade and a half, which began with hope and included such achievements as the completion of the High Dam, but ended in deep disillusionment after the defeat of 1967. Morale recovered after the 1973 war and particularly after the launching of the "Open Door" policy, when materials once more became available to artists and patrons other than the State reappeared.

In the early years of the Revolution the new régime valued the work of artists and was keen to exhibit it for propaganda purposes both at home and abroad, particularly in other non-aligned countries. As a reward for behaviour in conformity with the goals of the régime, sabbaticals to work in an atelier in Upper Egypt were given to promising artists and several received generous state scholarships to study abroad in Spain, Italy, France or Germany.

During their sojourns in these countries young Egyptian painters no doubt gained valuable training and learned an enormous amount from European museums and galleries. In addition to experiencing the European visual heritage, however, they were also subjected to an onslaught of influences from new post-war European and American art, which had sprung from this heritage and thus had origins very different from those pertaining in Egypt. The result was not always very happy. "The application of new artistic styles," says Karnouk, "without coming to grips with the essence of the original historic context of these styles" was apt to lead to shallow imitation.

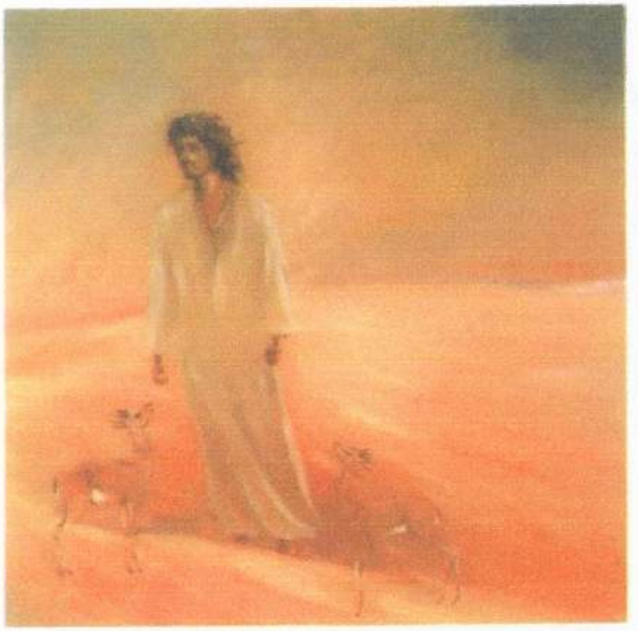
Since these young men were the darlings of the State, however, they returned home to be brought into the pyramidal structure of the Ministry of Culture and the state-run art schools, where they served as administrators, teachers, adjudicators, and arbiters of taste. There they have remained firmly ensconced, wielding a kind of power over artistic life unparalleled elsewhere since the collapse of the Iron Curtain. "All initiatives and commissions fall under the administrative committees of the various ministries," Karnouk observes, "who dictate even today what should be done and by whom". (P19) Well-meant initially, the formation of this cadre of artist-bureaucrats, however well trained and competent they may be, has had a suffocating effect on those free spirits who fail to fit into the system or to please the people who run it. In recent years, fortunately, private patronage has had a healthy comeback, as large corporations and private individuals have once again become able to seek out and buy art of their own choosing.

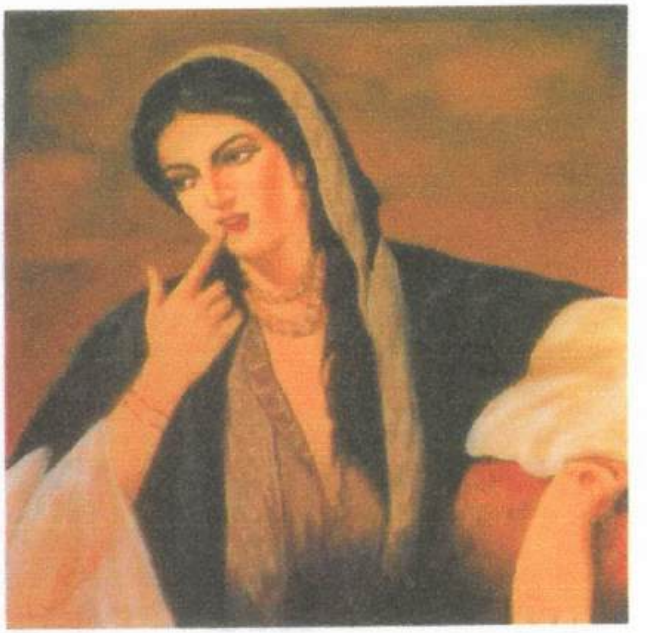
Into her historical and sociological overview, Karnouk weaves critical reviews of the work of fifty modern Egyptian painters. Grouping them into categories according to similarities of style and outlook, she surveys the resulting "schools," then judges the works of artists individually. Karnouk is a feisty critic and addresses her subjects with a bouquet in one hand and a brickbat in the other. These crisp assessments are perhaps the book's most striking, attractive, and original feature.

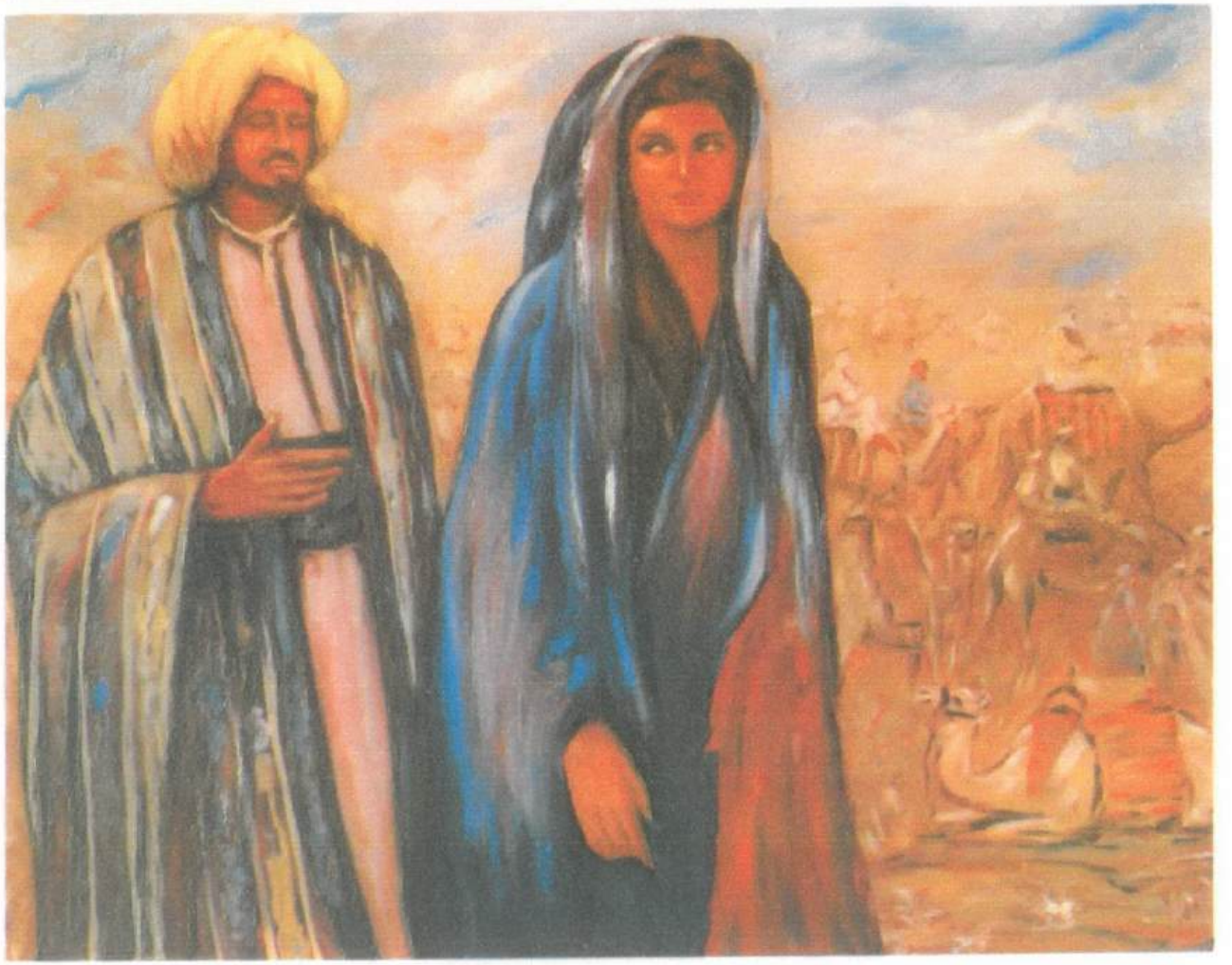
Egyptian artistic identity has been asserted overtly in various ways. Several painters have opted for the safety and familiarity of exploring a well-known repertoire of folk objects, signs or cultural symbols - dancing horses, for examples, sugar dolls, feluccas, pyramids, domes, minarets, or patterns of mashrabiyya. Others have experimented with the limitless possibilities of Arabic script. Karnouk's thoughtful explanation of the preoccupation with calligraphy may be particularly enlightening for Western reader. "Calligraphy," she says, "developed as the supreme art form of Islam".

A somewhat different group, whose philosophy of 'Art and Life' dates to pre-Revolutionary days, includes among its members Hamed Said, Ramses Wissa Wassef and Hassan Fathi. Very few of the first generation of these artists and architects are still living, but their taste in lifestyles, art, and architecture has had a widespread influence, which was never quite overwhelmed by the demands of the *sawra* and has also survived the subsequent tidal wave of Open-Door consumerism. Other free spirits, such as Hamed Abdallah, George Bahgouri and Adham Henein, escaped to France, where they did not thrive, obviously missing the light and ambience of their native land.

The Alexandrians are treated as a group by Karnouk, who thinks they display common qualities of vision, spontaneity and originality. Several joint efforts and associations are discussed. Particularly sympathetic is Karnouk's appreciation of the work of the Axis group, composed of Ahmad Nawar, Abdul Hafiz al Farghali, Mustafa al-Razzaz and Abd al-Rahman al-Nashar, which emerged in the late 1970s and tried to express an idealised vision of Arab solidarity.







its richness, light and colour."

A number of Saudi and other Arab artists present at the exhibition remarked on the elements of sensitivity and movement in the paintings, which make Prince Khalid a combination of a painter and a poet. "This is what gives his paintings depth and remarkable excellence", said Naiel Y Mulla, himself a renowned Saudi artist. Another veteran artist Abdullah Hamas called Prince Khalid a humble prince, adding: "I admire the fact that he has time for his office, business and family affairs along with the pursuit of the arts."

Alwan al-Harouf: The Colour of Words

HELEN AL AMMARI



A colourful exhibition of watercolours and drawings by Prince Khalid Al Faisal, Governor of Asir region of Saudi Arabia, was held in Jeddah and Riyadh in the Spring, and was almost completely sold out. The proceeds went to the King Faisal Foundation in Riyadh which supports educational and cultural projects, and among other activities administers the annual international awards known as The King Faisal International Prize.

Popularly known as the "Prince of Arts", Prince Khalid, a son of the late King Faisal, was born in Makkah in February 1940, and has been interested in painting from his early years. He went to school in Taif, pursuing his hobby during weekends and holidays. He was sent to Princeton in USA for his Diploma, and came to Britain for his BA in Politics and Economics from Oxford University. He was appointed Director General of Youth Welfare Department (1967-71), later heading the Faisal Foundation in Riyadh.

This was the third in a series of his exhibitions: he first displayed his works in 1985, and again in 1989.His recent paintings exhibited in Jeddah and Riyadh (March 1995), aptly entitled *Alwan al-Harouf* (The Colour of Words, or literally, The Colour of Alphabets) were mostly inspired by classical Arabic poetic tradition, often directly interpreting specific couplets in an evocative visual vocabulary all his own and yet deeply rooted in the Arab and Islamic psyche and heritage.

A number of Saudi artists as well as those from other Arab countries were present at the exhibition in Jeddah which was opened by the Governor of Makkah, Prince Majid ibn Abdulaziz, at the Al Fau Holiday Inn. It later travelled to Riyadh where it was inaugurated by the Governor of Riyadh, Prince Salman ibn Abdulaziz, at Al-Khozama Centre. A portfolio of colour reproductions of some of the paintings, along with the poems in Arabic which inspired these, is available in a handsome edition.

Painting Poetry

Commenting on the exhibits, the art critic of the Arab News remarked that "Each of the paintings radiated a certain light, colour and sound, tempting one to describe the show as "sons et lumieres". One could almost hear the sounds of the battle in the paintings depicting such events. In one particular painting on the subject, you could see or rather "hear" Prince Khalid's mastery at work. Amid the din of the battle, a lone figure stands, looking at the sky with hands raised in prayer...Standing by the paintings of a group of women engaged in conversation, you hear the chatter come through clear, though not loud."

"The paintings express delicate feelings. Like the one of a dishevelled man in the desert with two deer looking at him with sympathetic eyes. The one about a man resting in the desert with his horse drinking water from a pond is both soothing and pleasing. "The painting of flowers in the desert is like a couplet remembered long after one has left the exhibition. Prince Khalid's paintings match the poems of leading Arab poets, and present Arab heritage in all

New Art Gallery at Al-Khobar



1995 marked the opening of Saudi Arabia's newest art gallery, run by an enterprising and discerning gallervist, Helen Al-Ammari. Known as Arabian Collections Gallery, it is located in the newly constructed Al Rashid shopping mall in Al Khobar, in close proximity to Dammam, Dhahran, Al Hasa and King Fahd Causeway, and accessible from major highways and Dhahran International Airport.

The gallery has also started a Newsletter: the first issue came out in September and introduced the works of an innovative Bahraini artist Wahab Koheji, whose exhibition earlier this year had launched the gallery by bringing the first of many artists of Arabian and Middle Eastern background to the attention of art collectors and connoisseurs in and around Al Khobar.

Born in Muharraq in Bahrain in 1945, Wahab Koheji has been painting for about 25 years, with several exhibitions in the Gulf, Europe and USA to his credit. He trained in fine arts – and in master framing – in England and Italy. His work is descriptive as well as decorative, having been "greatly influenced by the landscapes and surroundings of his childhood – the narrow, shady trees, the fishing dhows at anchor, the date gardens, misty dawns and soft sunsets, the mosques and local markets". His paintings thus provide an interesting record of the lifestyle and architectural heritage of the Gulf region, and are particularly inspired by the effects of strong light and shade in the desert climate, and the stark contrasts with the richly coloured textiles of the region. A selection of the artist's latest work in original silkscreen prints is also on sale at the gallery.

"As our name suggests", Helen Al-Ammari explains, "we are a gallery with a traditional Arabian focus, offering various types of



Islamic and Middle Eastern artwork. We will of course be happy to assist in finding any other type of art work by taking advantage of our extensive international contacts. The gallery has also made every effort to choose and train highly skilled staff ensuring that they are educated in all areas of the framing, care and conservation of art works, and our resident gallery consultant, Mr George Taylor, with 30 years' experience in the art and framing business, offers an invaluable wealth of knowledge and creativity."

ANNOUNCING AN OUTSTANDING PUBLICATION ON THE ARTS OF KUWAIT

KUWAIT: ARTS & ARCHITECTURE

A Collection of Essays, compiled by Arlene Fullerton and Géza Fehérvári



Kuwait: Arts & Architecture is an attempt to reflect significant aspects of the cultural life of Kuwait five years after the Gulf war. The book began as a response to a request from *Arts & The Islamic World* to put together a special edition on the arts of Kuwait. By sheer coincidence the two people asked to do this project were both art historians who had arrived in Kuwait within a month of one another in 1992 and who happened to be members of the Diplomatic community: Dr Géza Fehérvári was the Hungarian Ambassador Kuwait, and Mrs Arlene Fullerton, the wife of the British Ambassador. Both editors quickly realised that it would be a delightful way of learning more about an important and often neglected side of Kuwaiti life and readily took up the challenge. Originally a periodical of some ten to fifteen articles was envisaged. What came as a surprise to both compilers of this book was the breadth of the subject and the overwhelming cooperation and zeal of everyone approached to contribute to the project. The number of essays exceeded 30 and the limited resources and scope of the journal. It was therefore only through the generous sponsorship of Kuwait's leading institutions and private companies that this copiously illustrated (400 colour plates), 300 page hardbound book covering arts of the country came into being.

THE AL SABAH COLLECTION: *Dar Al-Athar Al-Islamiyyah*

Art in War and Peace
Hussah Sabah Salim al-Sabah

***The Dar al-Athar al-Islamiyyah*: Survival of a Collection**
Elizabeth Fullerton

Early Islamic Pottery Lamps
Géza Fehérvári

Islamic Pottery in Transition
Venetia Porter

The Search for Pattern: Carving in Mediaeval Ceramics
Oliver Watson

THE JASIM AL-HOMAIZI COLLECTION

A Brief History of the Jasim al-Homaizi Collection
Arlene Fullerton

The Candlestick of Abu Ishaq Inju
James W Allan

Early Islamic Astronomical Instruments in Kuwaiti Collections
David King

A Group of Syrian Underglaze Polychrome Painted Vessels in the Homaizi Collection
Géza Fehérvári

THE TAREQ RAJAB MUSEUM

The Tareq Rajab Museum -An Overview
Tareq S Rajab

Textiles and Embroideries in the TSR Museum
Jehan S Rajab

Lustre-Painted Wares in the Tareq Rajab Museum
Géza Fehérvári

Firearms in the Tareq Rajab Museum
Robert Elgood

ARCHAEOLOGY

Archaeological Research in Kuwait:-An Overview
Fahad al-Wohaibi

Kuwait and the West: Early Contacts at Failaka, al-Qusur and Akkaz
Jean-François Salles

A Trading Station on Failaka from the 2nd millennium BC
Poul Kjærum

The Kuwait Excavations at Bahnasa/Oxyrhynchus in Egypt: A Summary Report
Géza Fehérvári

ARCHITECTURE

Retracing Old Kuwait
Evangelia Simos-Ali

The Old British Political Agency, Kuwait
Zahra Freeth

Living With History: The Behbehani Complex
Ali al-Mulaifi

Mosques of Kuwait
Claudia Farkas al-Rashoud

A Personal View of Architecture in Kuwait
Stuart Bosel

The Arab Organisations' Headquarters Building: A Vision of Unity
Elizabeth Fullerton

PAINTING, SCULPTURE AND OTHER ARTS

Three Kuwaiti Artists: Jafar Islah, Sami Mohammed and Suad al-Essa
Arlene Fullerton

The Use of Calligraphy by Contemporary Arab Artists
Dale Egee

Modern Calligraphy from the Abdlatif Y al-Hamad Collection

Architecture on Canvas
Hamid A Shuaib

Kuwait's Art Galleries
Betty Lippoid

Renaissance of Integrity
Information Office, Bayt Lothan

***Aziza Ya Kuwait*: A Multimedia Production**
Gale Seery

The Liberation Murals of Kuwait
Sandra Shinn

ARTS AND THE STATE

The Role of the National Council for Culture, Arts & Letters
Sulaiman Al-Askari

KUWAIT: ART & ARCHITECTURE
A Collection of Essays
compiled by Arlene Fullerton and Géza Fehérvári
300 pages, Copiously illustrated;
Hardbound
November 1995

It is available through:

The Kuwait Bookshop Co Ltd
Muthanna Complex Basement 1
P O Box 291, 13030 Safat
Kuwait
Fax: +965 242 0558

Oman Heritage Exhibition at UNESCO

MUSA BIN JAAFAR BIN HASSAN

1995 brought to Paris an outstanding Omani Exhibition to celebrate the UNESCO Golden Jubilee which coincided with the Silver Jubilee of Oman.





Top: HE Mr Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO (left) with Dr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin Hassan, Ambassador Permanent Delegate of Oman to UNESCO. **Above:** HE Dr Ali Fakhro, Minister of Education of Bahrain (left) and HE Mr Federico Mayor.

It was held under the supervision of Omani Ministry of National Heritage and Culture, with the contribution of the Ministry of Information, and under the patronage of HE Mr Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO, from 16th to 29th May at UNESCO House.

The Exhibition presented a number of pavilions projecting 25 years of heritage and civilisation in the Sultanate of Oman through a varied selection of photographs, models, books, jewels and silverware.

The rich collection of jewels spanning two centuries comprised unique objects which are part of the old heritage of Oman. These pieces of solid silver are inlaid with semi-precious stones like coral and amber. Each region of Oman has its own style which is identified with the country's traditions and customs, marking the originality of the Omani society. These jewels are worn by the Omani women enhancing the colour scheme of their dress and make-up, and express the creativity of the craftsmen in this field.

The other pavilions highlighted the pioneering role of the Sultanate in UNESCO through the Cultural sites registered on the World Heritage List like the citadel of Bahla, the necropolises of Bat and Al Ayn and the site of Jadat Al Harassiss.

Bat Necropolises are five thousand years old and contain about three hundred tombs, some almost intact. As coherent units, each one includes an enormous necropolis linked to a dwelling area dominated by several round towers all separate from each other. The towers, with a diameter of 24 metres at the base, can reach the height of 10 metres.

The Al Ayn site is one of the most beautiful areas of Oman. The five thousand years old tombs built on a hill at the foot of the jebel Misht, a sheer rock face, more than 2000 metres high, seem to watch over the green oasis.

The two sites had been marked on the World Heritage List in 1987 to be part of the treasures of

human civilisation.

The Arabian oryx sanctuary, which is formally declared as a World Heritage site, covers vast and beautiful regions of Oman, encompassing sand dunes, gravel plains, mountains escarpments, sandy beaches and coastal cliffs. During 1981-1982, the first fourteen Arabian oryx were brought from USA to the Jiddat Al Harassiss to acclimatise in special enclosures and breed in a favourable habitat. Their number has increased and there are now more than 230 of them roaming free in the desert, under constant remote control and surveillance of the Harassiss Rangers.

The Exhibition also underlined the role of Oman in the maritime expedition of the silk routes and the Sultan Qaboos Prize for the protection of environment.

As emphasised by Mr Federico Mayor, Director General of UNESCO: "The maritime route, whose origins reach back over 3000 years owed its special prominence to the eighth and ninth century technical revolution of the Arab peoples. Particularly important in this respect was a major contribution of the Omanis to the art of shipbuilding. UNESCO's maritime expedition, which is being undertaken in the framework of the 'integral study of the silk roads: roads of dialogue' has been made possible by the generosity of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, Sultan of Oman, who has placed at its disposal his own ship, the Fulk Al Salamah (Ship of peace)."

The purpose of the Sultan Qaboos Prize for the Protection of Environment is to accord recognition to the outstanding contributions by individuals, groups of individuals, institutes and organisations in the management of preservation of the environment. These are consistent with the policies, aims and objectives of UNESCO in relation to the organisation's programs in this field, environmental education and training, creation of environmental awareness through the preparation of environmental information materials, and activities aimed at establishing and managing protected areas such as biosphere reserves and natural world heritage sites.

A special pavilion of the exhibition displayed the "Sultan Qaboos Encyclopaedia for the Arab Names" which is the result of the personal initiative of His Majesty for an extensive research which covered a number of areas including language, socio-linguistics, history, politics, folklore and literature. This work involved some hundred and fifty researchers from different Arab states. It consisted in gathering with computers all the Arab names (7 millions) with statistical studies, using scientific methods to find for each name its original root, its meaning and its pronunciation.

The Encyclopaedia is composed of four parts in eight volumes, and was presented during a ceremony in the UNESCO's Library, to HE Mr Federico Mayor, Director General, as a gift from H M Sultan Qaboos Bin Said to UNESCO, to add a new human dimension to the close relationship already exiting already between Oman and UNESCO.

The exhibition "Oman and UNESCO: Civilisation and Development" celebrated two great occasions: the golden Jubilee of UNESCO and the Silver Jubilee of the Sultanate of Oman, and was rich in the means and symbols which emphasise common purposes and close collaboration.

UNESCO has been involved in the process of building a global edifice of peace through a well pursued programme of education based on science and culture as instruments of enlightenment and progress.

In Oman we are keenly aware of the importance of heritage and its preservation, and the diffusion of culture through the development of its human potential. We also believe that culture is an integral part of its development which could not be complete without a moral and intellectual dimension.

In the exhibition, the significant contribution of Omani women was highlighted through the beautiful paintings by two women artists emphasising the vital and constructive role Omani women have consistently played towards the integrated national development and aesthetic environment.

Dr Musa Bin Jaafar Bin Hassan is the Ambassador and Permanent Delegate of Oman to UNESCO.

continued from page 98

Dubai's Museum for the People

treasure. Their songs are a haunting reminder of times gone by. Fish swim by on suspended glass screens. On one side craftsmen are seen constructing a full size dhow and nearby fishermen sell their daily catch. All the faces of the figures here and throughout the Museum are based on real people, and as such add greatly to the authenticity of the dioramas. Even the fish displayed in the fish market are made from moulds taken from real fish. From the gallery, we see back to the beginning of the visitors' journey, back to the arrival by Dhow and so we complete our journey through the early modern life of Dubai.

The final gallery deals with another time and another people. This period is 5000 years ago, the people are the ancestors of today's citizens of Dubai. The message here is one of conservation and the need to piece together the evidence of that far past. The displays illuminate the process of archaeology and the wonder that is experienced as the earth gives up its secrets. A series of showcases display a selection of beautiful pottery, steatite and bronze artefacts from the five millenniums of Dubai's rich history. This exploration of the continuum of life is an essential part of any nation's future. One display transforms the ruin of a tomb as it is today, into the glory of the original building. The presentation is enclosed in rocks cast from actual rocks in the Hatta area. A diorama of archaeologists at work includes two tombs transported from Al Qusais.

These tombs, dating back to 2000BC still contain their original skeletons and the objects which were buried with them. Artefacts that are familiar today are seen to have been in use since man first inhabited the Gulf region.

The whole Museum takes visitors on a journey of discovery that provides them with a deep understanding of Dubai in time and space. Since the Museum was opened in March '95 by HE Sheikh Hamdan bin Rashid al Maktoum, Minister of Finance and Industry, large numbers of locals and overseas visitors have come to the Museum. The comments in the Visitor's Book make encouraging reading for everyone involved with the Museum's development. It is clearly a great success and evokes a very powerful response. Visitors of all types and ages obtain a vision of the Dubai they had never known before. They discover the heritage and the way of life, which, even though transformed today, still nourish the people and make Dubai the great trading and financial success that it is in the 1990s.

Science University of Malaysia's Islamic scholars Dr Salleh Yaapar and Fatimah Ali looked at "Qur'an and Islamic Art."

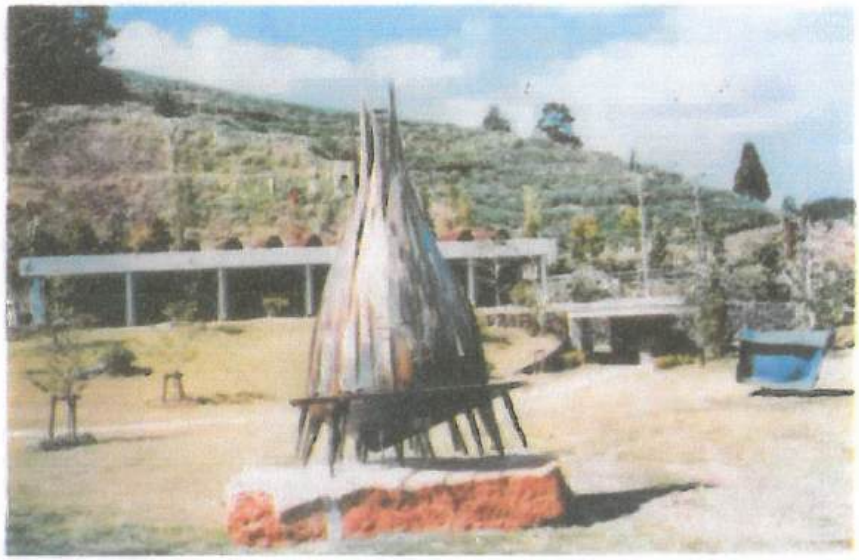
An exhibition on the theme "From Tropical Wood" was held at the National Art Gallery in September. What was interesting about this exhibition was that artists who received formal art education had the experience of working with artisans for two weeks at the Forest Research institute. It was an exciting experience for these artists who came from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds. The oldest in the group was Menteri Bani, a Tok Batin from the Jah-Hut tribe who is 91 years old. The result was a display of about sixty works such as masks, sculptures, wood panels and installation works.

"Her Presence In Colours" was an exhibition by 12 women artists from China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. It was held at the Penang State









Top, left: Sulaiman Esa, **Garden of Certainty II**, mixed media, 1995. **Top, right:** Rahim anak Adam, **Moyang Pepit**, wood, 38 x 11.5 cm, 1995. **Above, left:** Khatijah Sanusi, **Anugerah II**, mixed media, 1995. **Above:** Ramlan Abdullah, **Growth**, 1995.

Kuala Lumpur Newsletter

SHARIFAH ZURIAH ALJEFFRI

Several significant arts events took place in Malaysia in the past few months. Prominent artist Syed Ahmad Jamal received the prestigious Ministry of Culture, Arts and Tourism National Arts Award. He is the second recipient to receive this biennial award; the first went to Master Puppeteer (Shadow Play) Hamzah Awang Amat in 1993. Such an honour given to an artist is very important as it demonstrates the government's acknowledgement and appreciation of the contributions made by artists in enriching the nation's arts and cultural heritage.

As a tribute to his enormous contribution to the development of contemporary visual art in Malaysia, the National Art Gallery held a special exhibition of selected works by Syed Ahmad Jamal from May 20 - June 15, 1995.

The sixty-six year old contemporary artist is a man of many talents. He is a sculptor, art administrator, writer, art critic and an intellectual whose writings are visionary. His most renowned work is the publication of "Rupa dan Jiwa" ("Form and Spirit") based on his curated show of the same title held in 1979 which looked at Malay arts and crafts in a new aesthetic way. He is currently translating it into English.

Syed Ahmad Jamal received the National Diploma in Design from the Chelsea School of Art, London in 1954 and the Diploma in Art Education from the Institute of Education, University of London in 1956. From 1963-64 he studied sculpture at the School of the Art Institute of Chicago and in 1973 he received an East-West Centre grant to study Asian Art History at the University of Hawaii.

His professional career included as Director of the National Art Gallery (1983-1991), Director of the University of Malaya Cultural Centre (1979-1982), and Principal of Specialist Teachers Training Institute (1965~1973). Together with some other art educators, he formulated a curriculum for the training of art teachers that later formed the basis for art education in schools in Malaysia.

Among his many awards and achievements were the Asean Cultural Award for Visual Art (1987), Australian Cultural Award (1984), First Prize Mural for the National Bank (1970) and the Indian Government Federation Art Competition (1962).

Another artist who did Malaysia proud is Ramlan Abdullah who won top prize of 60,000 US dollars in the Oita Asian Sculpture Exhibition/Competition in Japan in October. The 35 year old sculptor who is a lecturer at the Fine Art Department of Institute of Technology MARA beat six other sculptors from Japan and South Korea for the award.

Ramlan says his entry GROWTH "is about the natural heritage and culture of Asia. It consists of many layers of rhythmic vertical structure symbolising the growth and the progression of Asian nations towards Eastern culture."

Besides the Oita award Ramlan has also won prizes at the Kuching Waterfront Sculpture Competition, Sarawak (1993) and the Second Annual Wartburg Library Art Competition in US. Ramlan has a Masters in Fine Art from Pratt Institute, New York.

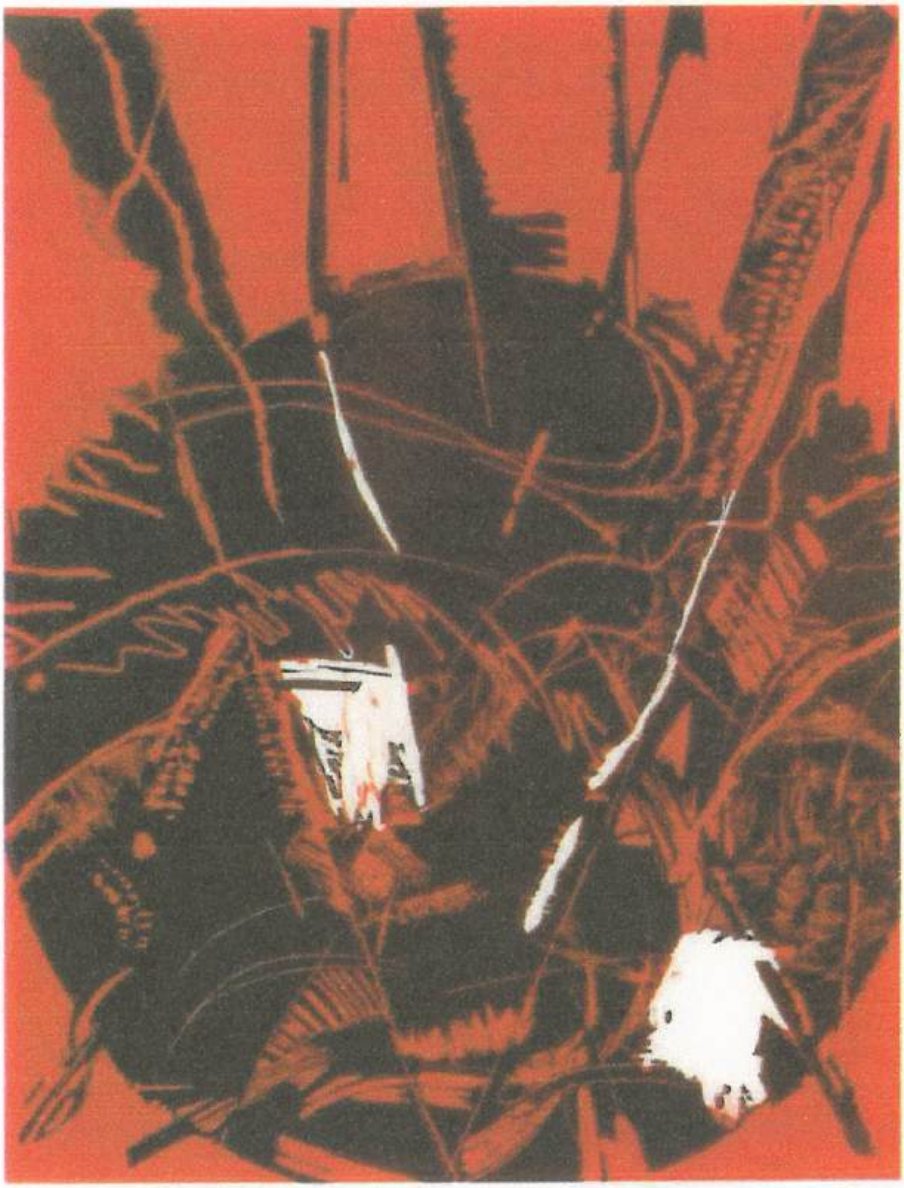
Malaysian artists have been participating in a number of exhibitions overseas either organised through the National Art Gallery or privately. In November the National Art Gallery organised an exhibition on Contemporary Malaysian art at the "Enrique Larreta" Museum in Buenos Aires, Argentina. Twenty-two artists participated in the recent Islamic Cultural Festival Istiqlal II held in Jakarta while eight were invited to take part in the Al Fann – Die Kunst exhibition of contemporary art from Islamic and Islam influenced countries. Another group went to the Exposition Art Actuel, Dammary-les-Lys Castle, France. Early this year Malaysia participated in the First Johannesburg Biennale, and the exhibition and seminar on Contemporary Art of the Non-Aligned Countries in Jakarta with the theme "Unity in Diversity". Then there was the Asia Biennale in Bangladesh in November.

On the home front, the art scene is full of vitality and creativity. Members of the newly-formed art group called Matahati (eye of the heart) are making waves in the Contemporary Malaysian art scene. Since its inception two years ago, the group has held several art exhibitions in Kuala Lumpur, the latest being in the newly set-up art gallery called Pelita Hati. Their art works generally deal with pain, social problems and atrocities.

Lembaran '95, an annual group show organised by the Malaysian Artists Association received much praise in the local media showcasing "exciting works". There were also several solo exhibitions which were outstanding. For example, Yusof Ghani's continuation with his Masks Series *(Topeng II)* was in great demand; Norma Abbas' works have been described as "portraying various strata of Malaysian society in volatile colours and textures that form coherent compositions in which her characters come alive"; well-known photographer Eric Peris' images of nature in decay were simply stunning; and Juhari Said's woodblock prints were powerful.

The Philip Morris Group of Companies' Asean Art Award in its second year was held in Jakarta at the end of August. The top award went to Filipino artist Alfredo Esquillo Jr for his work entitled "Ritual"; second prize went to Thailand's Nawin Biadklang for his work "Female Display for Sale"; Indonesia's Dr Effendi came out third with his work called "Balbos Kanis III" which was about the repression against women and children. Wong Yean Yean from Singapore was fourth place while fifth place went to Ferdinand Doctolero from the Philippines. Malaysia's Hasnul J Saidon and Wan Hui-jyu together with Indonesia's Drs Sunaryo were awarded honourable mention.

A major exhibition on contemporary Malaysian Islamic art on the theme "Art and Spirituality" was held at the National Gallery in August. The objective of this exhibition was to explore the Islamic content in contemporary art in Malaysia. The works displayed diverse influences and they included paintings, textiles and photography. In conjunction with the exhibition a two-day seminar was held. Among the paper presenters were Prof Dato Osman Bakar, a noted Islamic scholar and Vice Chancellor of the University of Malaya who presented a paper on "Understanding the Concept of Islamic Manifestation in Art"; well-known social activist and Chairman of JUST World Trust discussed "Islamic Artists Facing the Challenges of the 21st century"; and



Art Gallery. The show was organised by Yuen Chee Ling who together with Norma Abbas, Sharifah Fatimah Zubir and Sylvia Lee Goh represented Malaysia at this exhibition.

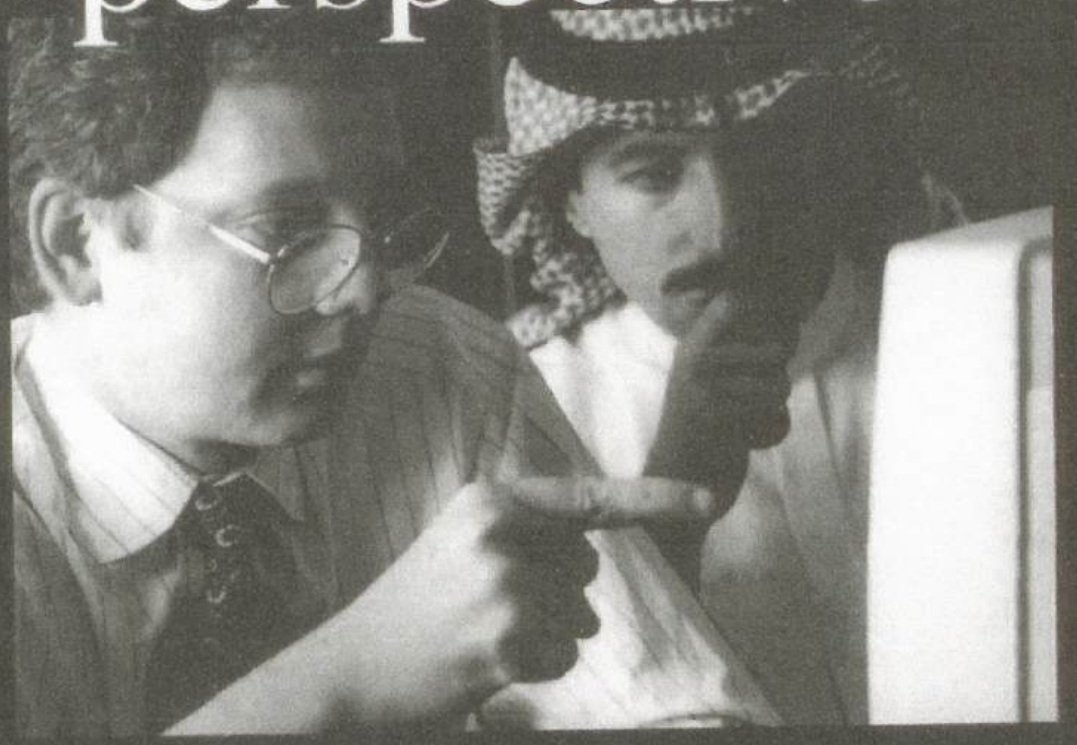
In the performing arts, the main highlight for the year was Sutra's RESTU Festival under the leadership of well- known Malaysian dancer and choreographer, Ramli Ibrahim. At this elaborate and exciting Arts, Dance and Drama Festival, Ramli Ibrahim revived the traditional dances from Kelantan and explored the scope of contemporary dance. There was also a children's theatre and a dramatic play called 'Lady Swettenham", based on the historical biography of Sir Frank Swettenham written by H S Barlow. Forums were held as part of the Festival focusing on traditional theatres and the arts in the context of modern society. Raja Fuziah binte Raja Tun Uda gave a talk on Malaysian Crafts: Old Masters and New Forms. Exhibitions of crafts of Malaysia and photographs of dances were also held.





Top: Juhari Said, **Blue Mountain II**, woodblock print. 59.5 x 79.5 cm, 1994. **Above:** Syed Ahmad Jamal (left) explaining to His Majesty the King about his painting after the Award ceremony. Looking on is the Honourable Minister of Culture, Arts and Tourism Dato Sabbiruddin Chik. **Right:** Eric Peris, **"RWPA"**

global perspective



VOTED "Best Bank in Saudi Arabia" IN EUROMONEY'S AWARDS FOR EXCELLENCE FOR 1993, 1994 & 1995

Though a truly Saudi Arabian bank, we look well beyond the boundaries of the Kingdom with international expertise and experience that gives us a genuine global perspective.

Our team of professionals both in Saudi Arabia and overseas are deeply committed to their task of providing innovative and efficient solutions to the needs of our clients, whether institutional, corporate or private. Through our association with Citibank's worldwide network and our own offices in the financial centres of London, New York, Paris, Geneva and Istanbul we offer corporate banking, private and merchant banking, exchange-rate and exposure management techniques of a size and complexity to match your every need.

Our U.K. subsidiary, Samba Capital Management International (SCMI), is a leading investment management company. Based in London with US$2.5 billion under management, it identifies broad trends in world capital markets, and has achieved highly competitive returns through investment in equities and bonds of the highest quality.

So for the truly global perspective that gives your business dealings the extra edge and international facilities you need today, talk to the bank that speaks your language, the language of leadership.

Saudi American Bank البنك السعودي الامريكي

Talk to the *Leader*.

Head Office: P.O. Box 833, Riyadh 11421, Tel: (01) 477 4770. **Samba London:** Nightingale House, 65 Curzon St., London W1Y 7PE, Tel: (44) (171) 355 4411.
Samba New York: 666, 5th Avenue, New York, NY 10103, Tel: (1) (212) 307 8274. **Samba Geneva:** Samba Finance S.A., 3 & 7 Rue du Commerce, 1204 Geneva, Tel: (41) (22) 310 24 00.
Samba Istanbul: P.O. Box 49, Levant, Istanbul, Tel: (90) (11) 300 2847. **Samba Paris:** 51 Avenue Hoche, Paris 75008, Tel: (33) (1) 438 00000.

Ahmed Moustafa's Visit to Pakistan

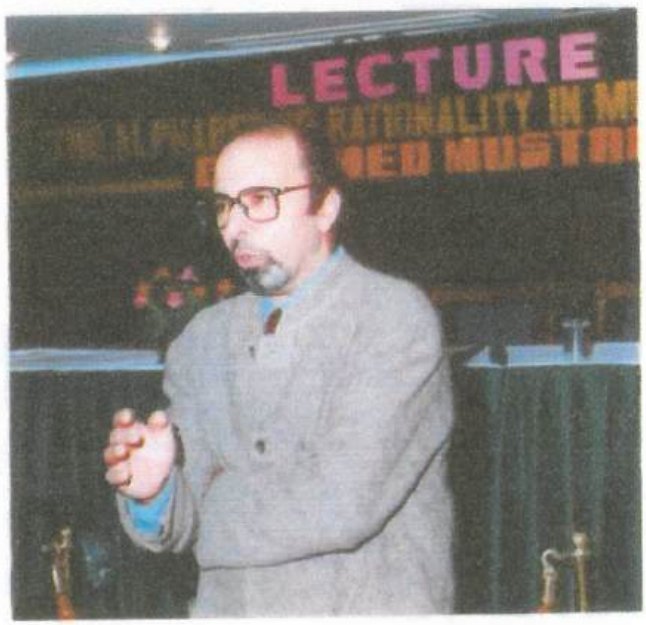
M Athar Tahir



Dr Ahmed Moustafa, internationally renowned for his Arabic penmanship and creative application of calligraphy in various decorative arts was, recently, the guest of the Pakistan Export Promotion Bureau. His visit was arranged by the Commercial Counsellor of the Pakistan High Commission, London.

During his week-long, (25 Nov - 3 Dec 1995) first, visit to Pakistan, Dr Moustafa delivered illustrated lectures to the National College of Arts, Lahore, the members of the Fine Arts Department, Punjab University, Lahore and the Pakistan National Council of the Arts, Islamabad. The subject of his lectures was "The Alphabet of Rationality in Muslim Art". He stated that the alphabet of the Arabic script was the basis of all Muslim art and architecture. He demonstrated how the proportions of letter shapes were laid out by the ninth century master and "Geometrician", Ibn Muqla and provided new insights into the hidden principles governing the sacred geometry of Islamic art. His lectures stimulated great interest among the audience. He was interviewed by leading Pakistani dailies and on the Pakistan Television.

Several meetings with professional bodies, designers, calligraphic-artists, painters and decorators in Lahore, Islamabad and Karachi were held. He visited up-market carpet, *gabba*, furniture and embroidery workshops and was shown the wide range of Pakistani work. Dr Moustafa felt that there was need to diversify the highly developed carpet industry and embroidery skills of the Pakistani craftsmen. He felt that designers should play a more prominent role in this sector, explore the areas of tapestry-weaving and designer-led products, and tap the great store of



Muslim heritage at their disposal.

Dr Moustafa's own tapestries are woven in Aubusson, France and as such he stressed the need to reintroduce this "movable architecture" to the Muslim world. He pointed to the international demand for such works and stated that Pakistan was in a unique position to make substantial contribution in this field. Impressed by the embroidery and needle-work, he opined that such work was amongst the finest in the world and needed to be adequately projected on the international level.

Al Furqan Heritage Foundation: Conference and Exhibition

A HAMILTON

In December 1991, Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation took its position on the Islamic Studies scene with an inaugural conference on "The Significance of Islamic Manuscripts". This was, by and large, an affirmation of the raison d'etre of the Foundation and a celebration of its birth.

Two years later, the Foundation convened its second conference. This dealt with numerous aspects of the study of manuscripts: dating a text, verifying its author, checking derivative texts against an original, etc. This conference was most timely in that it fed into the cataloguing work being undertaken by the Foundation, and also into the post-graduate courses for the training of cataloguers of Islamic manuscripts which the Foundation set up durin the ensuing two years in Cairo, Istanbul and Londor

The Foundation's latest conference, held on 18 and 19 December 1995, at the Foundation's headquarters Eagle House, Wimbledon, dealt with conservation. Th conference was master-minded by one of the members of its distinguishe International Advisory Council, Professor George Atiyeh. Head of the Near CD ROM, were dealt with by Dr Werner Schwartz of Gottingen University.

Professor Ibrahim Chabbouh (for many years head of the project for the restoration of the city of Kairouan in Tunisia, and now Secretary General of the Al-Albait Foundation in Amman), presented a pilot study for a historical dictionary containing all Arabic terms ever used in manuscript production. This project was greeted with enthusiasm by the delegates. Apart from its historical significance, it would open the door to the study of traditional methods of conservation used in the past: methods which have been largely lost, but which Dreibholz has worked for eight years in Sanaa and demonstrated the gentleness and minimum interference she feels is necessary in dealing with old paper.

Tony Bish talked about the work he has been doing in the Khalidiyyah Library in Jerusalem. Repeatedly he demonstrated how much time of his was taken up in undoing the work of past conservators. This was a theme taken up by David Jacobs and Barbara Rodgers of the British Library who showed how Islamic books which had, during conservation, been bound in 'European' fashion, showed signs of terrible strain. The British Library now unbinds these books and explores



collection.

Dr A R Bedar, Head of the Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library in Patna, India, delivered a passionate plea for the protection of rare manuscript collections against the wilful destruction engendered by fanaticism and hatred, and described the complicated procedures resorted to by his staff in Patna to protect their library.

Professor Mohamed Bencherif, former head of the Public Library of Rabat, Morocco gave a resume of the library's conservation policy, and Dr Mura al-Rammah, current head of the Kairouan Project, updated delegates on the progress of his work. Mr Nasri Iskander, head of conservation at the Egyptian Museum, presented a prototype box, developed by the Museum, to protect artefacts from dust and excessive degrees of temperature and humidity.

Amparo de Torres and Ann Seibert, both from the Library of Congress, discussed the Library's conservation philosophy and how it had evolved. As with the hands-on conservators, the emphasis was always on simplicity, on employing basic house-keeping procedures, and on minimal

individuals and institutes with an interest in the Islamic cultural heritage. Its first instrument will be a newsletter to set up and maintain contact between all its members. Persons interested in joining should write to the Foundation's address at Eagle House, High Street, Wimbledon, London SW19 5EE, and mark their letters AFIM.

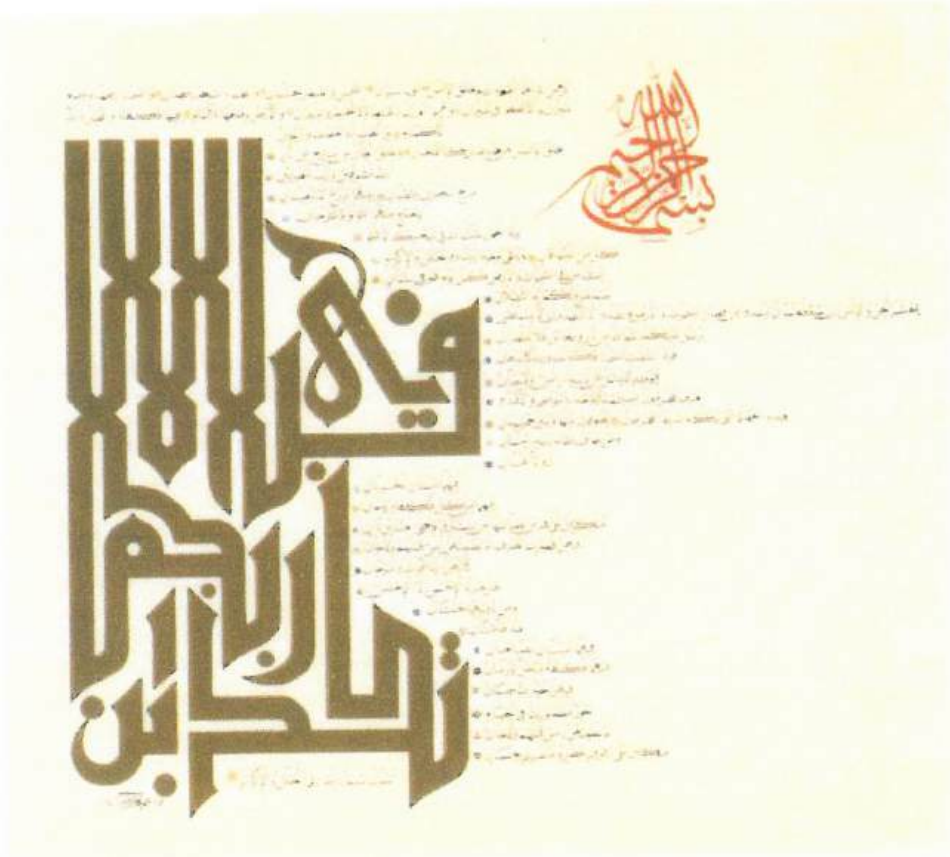
On Monday, 20 November, the Chairman of Al-Furqan Islamic Heritage Foundation, His Excellency, Sheikh Ahmed Zaki Yamani, inaugurated the Foundation's first Exhibition at Eagle House. This was a series of works by the renowned Pakistan calligrapher, Mr Rasheed Butt. Mr Butt's works are some of the finest examples of traditional Islamic calligraphy to be produced by a contemporary artist. They are mainly inspired depictions of Qur'an and Hadith texts although



they also contain some Arabic and Persian poetry.

The preview was attended by some 200 guests. The exhibition was open to the public for two weeks and attracted a great many viewers and received wide coverage in the Press. An education programme was also initiated by the Foundation. Students from some London schools visited the exhibition and attended two-hour workshops with Mr Butt, where they learned some of the basic techniques of calligraphy, as well as something of the spiritual values it seeks to both express and develop. Among the schools that took part were the Ursuline Convent, Wimbledon School of Art and others.

Mr Butt was accompanied by his daughter who executes all the illuminations in his work.





Opposite page, above left and top: Calligraphic works by Rasheed Butt. **Above:** Conference proceedings. Podium, left to right: Dr Higazi of Dar al-Kutub, Cairo; Dr Jan Just Witkam of Leiden University Library & Editor of Manuscripts of the Middle East; Professor Yusuf Ibish.

An Opera Set in the Heavens

HAFIZ KARMALI

A theatre director with a special interest in cross-cultural performing arts recapitulates a London project undertaken in collaboration with a number of artists from Tajikistan.

During the summer of 1994, I was in Central Asia conducting research into indigenous performing traditions. An adventurous flight through the Pamir mountains from Dushanbe, the capital of Tajikistan ended in Goro-Badakshan, where even the remotest villages on the roof of the world boast a theatre or *klub* as it is familiarly known. In these intimate surroundings, almost every night an audience of a hundred might gather to attend a concert (this although television is widely available).

On offer are highly codified forms of entertainment - *dargilik, lalaik, falak* -melancholy odes, lullabies and songs of fate; a variety of dances – *akob* (eagle), *aspak* (horse), *kuza (vase);* chamber orchestral arrangements from the traditional catalogue of instruments - *daf, rubab, riyak* to the strange but melodious clarinet / accordion combinations.

Drawing from this surfeit of riches in sound and movement, an ensemble of twelve performers from Badakshan was invited to showcase some of its work as part of a lyrical drama presented at Grosvenor House in London.

Prologue

Composed in three movements – awakening, yearning and union – the opera is set in the heavens, as it were, and opens with a Prologue appropriating a phrase from a Tajik wedding song, *Shah-i ma khushamadi* – King of ours, You are welcome. This refrain, ordinarily used by the bride to receive the groom, is here chanted by the ensemble from atop a staircase, as if echoing through the Pamirs, and greeting the guest of honour descending the staircase opposite.
A procession lends the evening its regal atmosphere – a court entertainment, as it were.

In counterpoint, we hear a lively piece of popular Egyptian music reminiscent of a bazaar, as stagehands unfurl a large white ground cloth which billows down into place: a hint of transformation from bare stage to sacred space. The mundane everyday existence gives way to the otherworldly. Dare we say we are transported from the bazaar via magic flying carpet to the heavens?

Actors take their positions in various states of slumber. There is silence: a moment of evocative stillness.

Awakening

In Badakshani folklore, the rising sun is heralded by women playing polyrhythmic beats on the *daf* - a circular frame drum. For the performance, this image juxtaposed with an actor ever so slowly raising an outsized brass tray, evokes sunrise. A call to prayer chanted by the muezzin is heard in the distance. The phrase, "prayer Is better than sleep" is recited – reverberating theme of awakening, both physical and spiritual.

Angels appear in window frames in the balcony above, sprinkling rose water upon the disciples, beckoning them to their posts.

A figure in green traverses the stage; a devotional ode serenades to the strains of the *tanpura*, an Indian string instrument.

The poet Rumi appears. He recites the invocation from his *Mathnavi:* the song of the reed. The reed flute provides Rumi with an ideal symbol of the soul which can utter words only when touched by the lips of the beloved. The soul laments its severance from the "reed-bed" – the spiritual world where it once dwelt in bliss in a state of pre-existence.

Yearning

Echoing the sentiment of separation in Rumi's invocation, a figure emerges from the shadows and, in silhouette, sings *dargilik* – a mother longs to be re-united with her child.

A moment later she has vanished.

The stage is decorated with sea waves operated manually harking back to the days of Baroque theatre

High above there is a castle,
Down below flows the river
I am a fish in the river
My lord come to save me

Rendered first in its language of origin sung in the style of qawali – the form of Sufi intoxication par excellence – and then deconstructed in translation, repeating infinitely to a meter set by a post-modern composer, Philip Glass, the verse above expresses man's spiritual quest metaphorically.

The human soul is likened to a fish in the river yearning for its origins. The difficulty of the task is illustrated as the effort of the fish to swim to shore and then climb a high and fortified castle. As if in Wagnerian opera or Maeterlinck's Pelleas and Melisande, we are now in the sublime world of fairy tales.

Guided now only by surreal logic, Rumi reappears and speaks of insatiable thirst. The figure in green, a reference to the legendary Khizr – he who holds the secret of immortality – enacts the gesture of drinking at the spring of eternal waters.

Union

Mystical union involves a transformation of the lover's personality into that of the beloved. Rumi illustrates this in a tender story of a lover who, after a long contemplative journey, is admitted by the beloved only after having lost his identity he answers the friend's question "Who are you?" by saying, "It is you."

As if an apparition, the beloved hums the invocation of the reed, and as they walk, one leading the other, we are reminded of the master and disciple, Shams-i-Tabriz and Jalal uddin Rumi.

The figure in green, protected in the embrace of an angel's wing, reveals the divine mystery. All join in celebrating this celestial drama.

Epilogue

An improvised ending. An elderly musician lost in thought, eyes shut, plays on joyously, suddenly awakes to realize the ensemble has made its exit. Alone, he scampers about and scurries off-stage. Curtain.

The performance was also accompanied by a display of portraits of life in the ancient cities of Samarkand and Bukhara together with an array of musical instruments and Tajik crafts, along with a modest exhibition curated by Shellina Karmali. It served to introduce an almost re-discovered world of Islamic culture, bringing to mind a

Council. This impressive array of names strongly endorses the British sentiment to forge stronger links between Europe and Asia in all areas of investment, technology, business, government, culture and education. It also serves to highlight Britain's committment towards its own native Asian population i.e. to fully integrate and reflect this cultural diversity. Aside from cities like Bradford and Birmingham where the multi-cultural presence is so strong that much of the necessary infrastructure to support it is already established, Britain has a long way to go to adequately provide for all its Asian communities. Often third generation Britons, these people need a 'hands-on' approach to access their own history and better understand the cultural, economic and political climates that presently pervade. In cultural terms, aside from the collections in national institutions such as the V & A, the British Museum and others in smaller civic and university museums such as Bradford Museum, there are few permanent UK collections that accurately reflect their cultural heritage. Whether celebrating artistic legacies of ages past or highlighting contemporary artistic trends, the accessibility that the universal language of art offers should be fully utilised. Its latent power to build bridges of understanding is such that greater religious tolerance, political awareness and cultural appreciation can only flourish.

It is no coincidence that Asia House has already been equated with The Asia Society in New York whose philosophy purports many of the same tenets. They aim to work in close cooperation with each other and similar European institutions such as the IIAS (International Institute for Asian Studies) in Leiden and Asia House in Essen that seek the same objectives. However unlike The Asia Society, whose use of the term 'Asia' refers to land east of Egypt, the semantics that Asia House London apply are significantly different. For them the most western country represented is Pakistan, which together with other countries such as India, Sri Lanka, Burma, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Korea, Japan, Indonesia, Thailand, Singapore, Hong Kong and China make up the Asia House representation. An organisation which aims to *"provide a centre for deepening understanding of Asia today, its history, cultures and economies, and increasing awareness of the opportunities ahead"* will of course also include Islamic culture which had its origins in the Middle East.

There can be no better example that illustrates the importance of such insight than with the Central Asian republics. With the changing political map in this part of the world many of these republics have recently witnessed an explosion of foreign interest and investment that has seen trading partners established overnight. This has come about as a result of foreign recognition of the huge potential that their natural resources, growing economic stability, and rich cultural heritage offers.

The historical and cultural links that many of these countries share through trade and pilgrimmage routes can bring together such diverse and widespread places as China and Turkey. Such cross-fertilization is illustrated by their respective Ming and Iznik ceramic traditions which exemplify the close ties and huge influence such great civilisations experienced. The possibilities that such parallels offer are numerous, whether for passive celebration of past achievement or for active nurturing of future relations.

The first public event of Asia House was an exhibition of Chinese porcelains called *The Emperor's broken china - Reconstructing Chenghua porcelain* at Sotheby's, London. Held by Asia House, Donchester Ltd (the European arm of the Cultural Relics Bureau in the Chinese Ministry of Culture) and the Jingdezhen Ceramic Archaeological Research Institute, it was the first major art exhibition from mainland China to be seen in London for the last twenty years. Featuring 140 carefully reconstructed examples never before seen in the West and recently excavated from the imperial kiln site at Jingdezhen, the exhibition was also accompanied by a one-day symposium, bringing together some of the world's leading experts in this field. This partnership with Sotheby's was repeated in February '96 with an exhibition of Turkish Carpets from the collection of the Hungarian Museum of Applied Arts in Budapest. Other Asia House events have included a book launch in December '95 of "Mughal & other Indian paintings from the Chester Beatty Library" published by Scorpion Cavendish Limited in association with the World of Islam Festival Trust and sponsored by Eagle Star, and a Korean String Quartet performance planned for May '96.

The cooperation that these events reflect and the economic support that they generate should serve as an example of the benefits that such cultural collaborations can bring.

For all those sceptics who question the expedience of its philosophy, Asia House represents an important initiative that recognises the importance of cultural understanding, nurtures religious tolerance and encourages multi-lateral relations with a pluralism that provides context. This in itself is an achievement and should be welcomed wholeheartedly.

For more information please contact:
Asia House
39-40 St James's Place
London SW1A 1NS
Tel: 0171 499 1287
Fax: 0171 499 8618

back issues

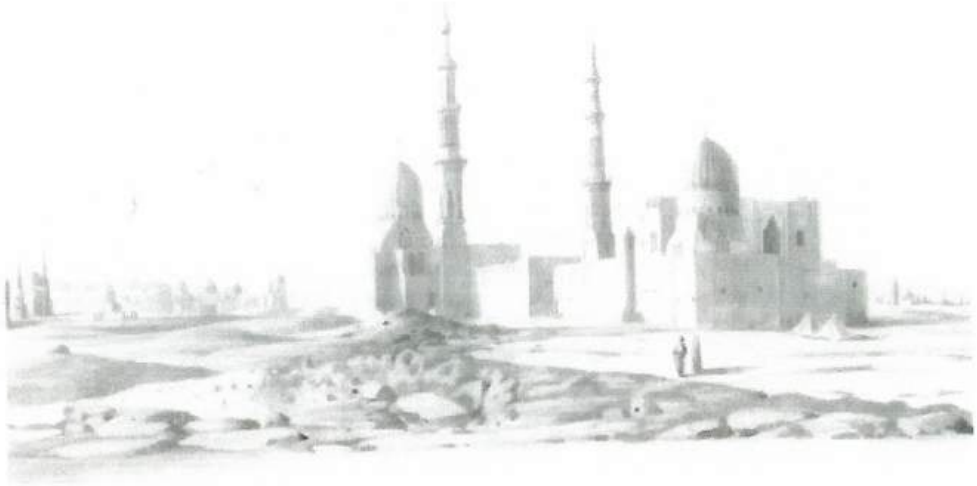
We keep receiving requests for back issues of ***Arts & The Islamic World.***

In most cases these are out-of-print and regrettably we are unable to supply.
If you have any back issues that you can spare *please let us know; we shall be happy to buy these back to meet such requests*

KINDLY WRITE TO **BACK ISSUES** *Arts & The Islamic World*
144-146 KING'S CROSS ROAD - LONDON WC1X 9DH - TELEPHONE +44 171 833 8275 - FAX +44 171 278 4797

Touring Egypt in 1834: An Artist's Album Rediscovered

SARAH SEARIGHT



In the summer of 1995, Durham University, England, held a conference about European travellers to Egypt in the 19th century. As it happened, I had just been asked by the London antiquarian booksellers, Bernard Quaritch Ltd, to research an album of 114 drawings and watercolours of Egypt that had recently come to light; so I was in the fortunate position of having completely fresh material to offer to the conference. On further investigation, I discovered that the artist, Admiral Sir Henry Byam Martin (1803-65), was of considerable interest and ability and that three other albums from his tour in the eastern Mediterranean - on Greece, Turkey, Lebanon and Syria - have also survived, as has an album of his sketches in Polynesia now in the possession of the Peabody Museum in Salem, Massachusetts.

Henry Byam Martin travelled as a young man to Egypt in 1834, painting as he went. As a tourist in Egypt, he is representative of a generation of travellers attracted to the Nile by the rediscovery of ancient Egypt. The attraction was partly the result of publications by the scholars who accompanied the French expedition to Egypt in 1798, partly because of the antiquities removed from the Nile valley in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, displayed in the capitals of Europe.

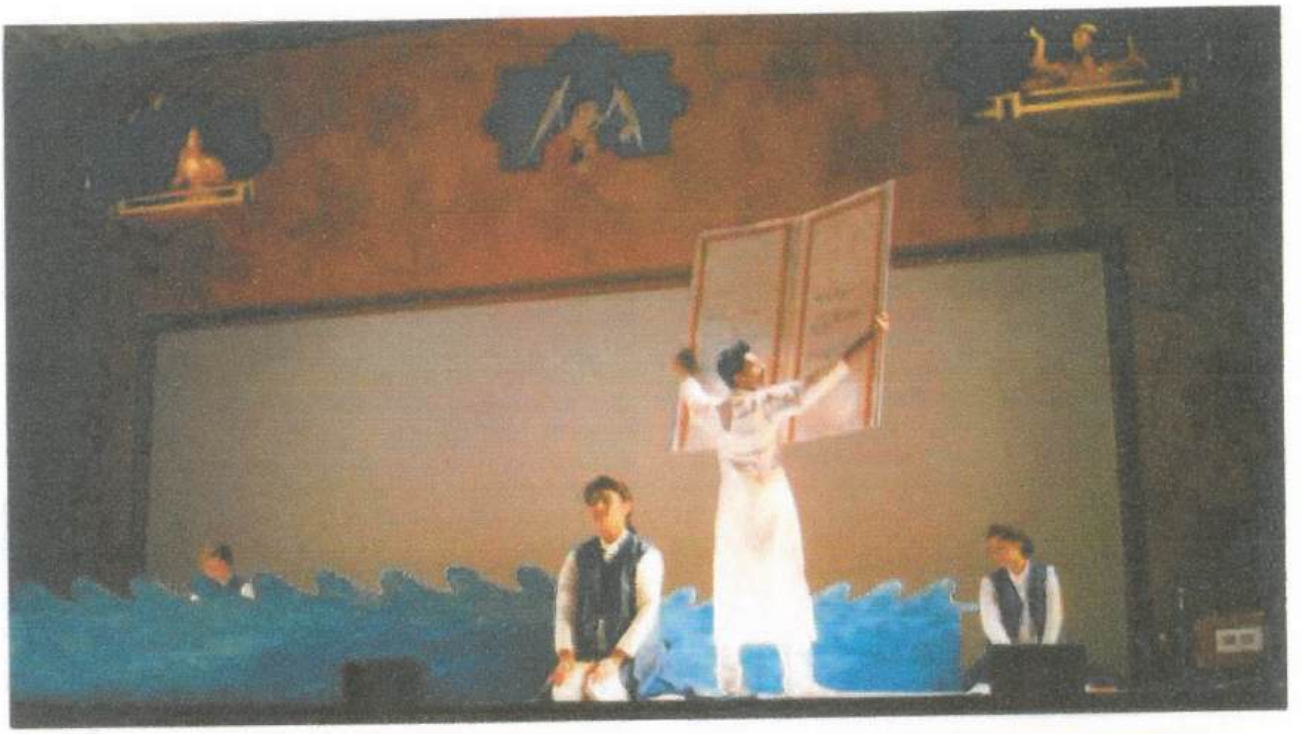
Martin's journey begins in the quarantine station in Alexandria where he could see the Egyptian fleet being refitted for action off Syria which the Egyptian viceroy Muhammad Ali had invaded in 1832. In due course Martin continues to Cairo where he sketched a number of medieval Islamic monuments, before hiring a boat to sail upriver as far as Wadi Halfa, taking in the various ancient sites on the way. Among these is Thebes, Aswan and Philae, Wadi Halfa and Abu Simbel. His sketches of Nubian sites between Aswan and Abu Simbel are a valuable record of monuments since moved to other sites or flooded by the waters of Lake Nasser.

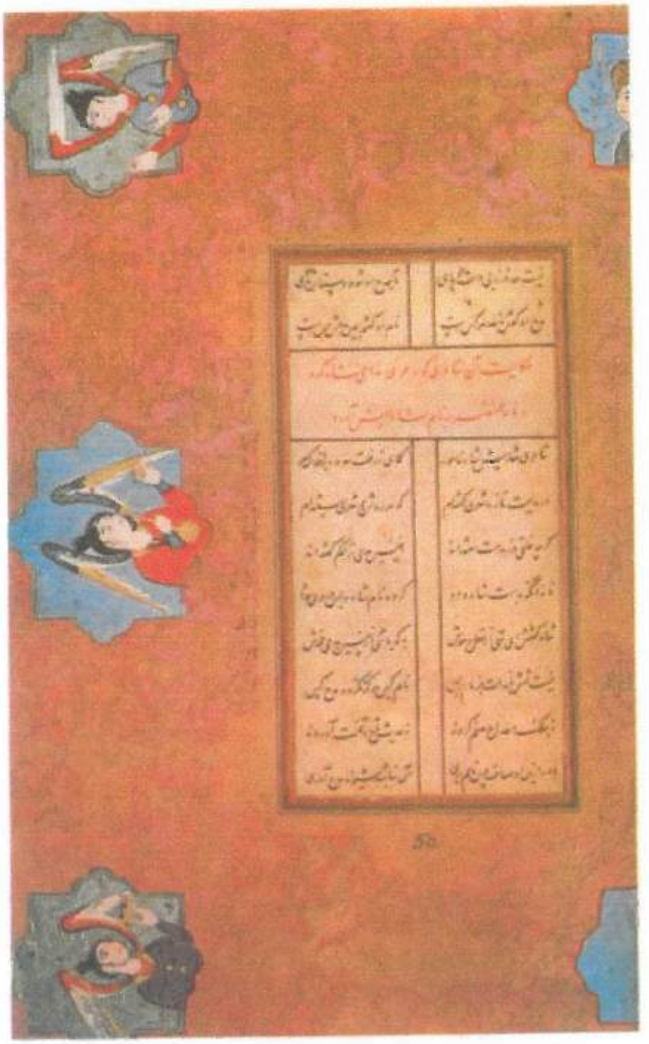
Martin's sketches serve as a journal, augmented by letters to his parents, now in the Martin Papers in the British Library. These include comments on the state of contemporary Egypt, under the rule of Muhammad Ali whose invasion of Syria was one of the opening moves in the so-called Eastern Question that so preoccupied European powers in the 19th century. Martin later took part in the allied defeat of the Egyptians in Syria.

The Egyptian album has now passed back into private hands, its existence and Martin's tour in the eastern Mediterranean recorded by this sparsely illustrated note. Further publication of his work would reveal the precision and attention to detail of a well-trained naval draughtsman who displays, beyond his technical competence, the subtler qualities of a skilled and emotive artist.

No 73. Ist Cataract, Aswan. Above: No 17. Mosque of Sultan Mu'ayyad Shaikh, Cairo.









Top: Rumi reads (invocation) from the *Mathnavi*. **Above:** Ensemble (*Shah-i Khusamadi*) welcomes the guest of honour. **Left:** A page from Abd Al Rahman Jami's *Salaman and Absal*

commonly told account about the city of Bukhara which is most revealing. It is said that whereas in all other parts of the world sunlight shines down from the sky, in Bukhara (etymological root: *vihara*, the Sanskrit word for higher learning) light shines heavenward – from Bukhara to the sky!

Launching of Asia House

CAMILLA EDWARDS

September 1995 saw the first public event of Asia House in London, a major initiative due to be formally launched in March 1996. It has been welcomed by Asian governments, the UK government and by the European Union as part of its new strategy for Asia, to create a European centre for Asian activities in the heart of London. Its aim to establish close cooperation with, and offer its facilities to, all those institutions, companies and cultural groups with interests in this field, will not only provide a forum for the interchange of ideas and knowledge but also a showplace where Asia's arts as well as its business, scientific and technological achievements can be displayed. It will fill the gap presently felt in Britain and the rest of Europe; that there exists no single institution devoted to improving European awareness of today's business, economic and social trends in Asia, and understanding of its histories and cultures. The financing for its operation is modelled on the American-style approach that encourages philanthropy and seeks subscriptions, sponsorship of events, revenue from its activities and income from endowments and legacies.

Corporate and cultural programmes have been drawn up with clear agendas set to carry out these objectives. With its cultural programme, Asia House aims to spread an interest in Asian affairs to a much wider public through a varied and dynamic programme in which the arts of Asia, past and present, will be presented in a vital manner with appeal to all ages. It will provide a distinctive meeting place for the exchange of knowledge and ideas among all interested in the creative and intellectual life of Asian countries. Through this it hopes to heighten awareness of the historical, cultural and economic cross currents which are often overlooked in isolated studies of individual Asian nations or regions and will foster the study of the arts and cultures and economies of Asian countries in the schools and educational community.

Among the British-based supporters that Asia House already boasts are a selection of high-ranking business executives and academic specialists who together form the Executive Committee, UK Development Board, Advisory Council and Subscriber group. Drawn from Britain's leading art institutions, galleries, museums, educational establishments, diplomatic circles and business sectors (not to mention an impressive representation from the foreign business sector and diplomatic core) they have voiced their concern to see relations with the world's largest and fastest growing region firmly established and fully utilised.

This timely initiative, led by the Chairman, Sir Peter Wakefield (a distinguished diplomat and former director of the NACF) has been endorsed by many leading politicians and businessmen who see it as part of a larger global committment.

Among those on the UK Executive Committee (Executive Committees are also being established in each Asian member country) who have specialist interests in the arts and culture of Asia are; Robert Skelton, former Keeper of Indian art at the V & A, Professor John Carswell, Head of the Islamic Department at Sotheby's, Julian Thompson, Chairman of Sotheby's Asia, Edmund Capon, Director of Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney, Guiseppe Eskenazi, Eskenazi Ltd, Oriental Fine Art and Alistair Duncan, World of Islam Festival Trust. Distinguished names on the Advisory Council include Dr Robert Anderson, Director - British Museum, Sir Martin Jacomb, Chairman - The British Council, Sir Robert Wade-Gery KCMG, Director - Barclays de Zoete Wedd and Chairman, SOAS, University of London, Sir Anthony Tennant, Chairman - Christie's International plc, Dr Jessica Ranson FBA, The Lord Callaghan KG, PC and The Rt. Hon Sir Edward Heath KG, MBE, MP, Rt. Hon Sir Leon Brittan QC, Rt.Hon Douglas Hurd CBE, MP and Sir Joseph Hotung, Chairman, Hong Kong Arts

"The proposed Asia House seems to me a further element in the network of political, commercial and cultural links which we in government are aiming to create with Asian countries."
Rt. Hon. Douglas Hurd, former Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs.

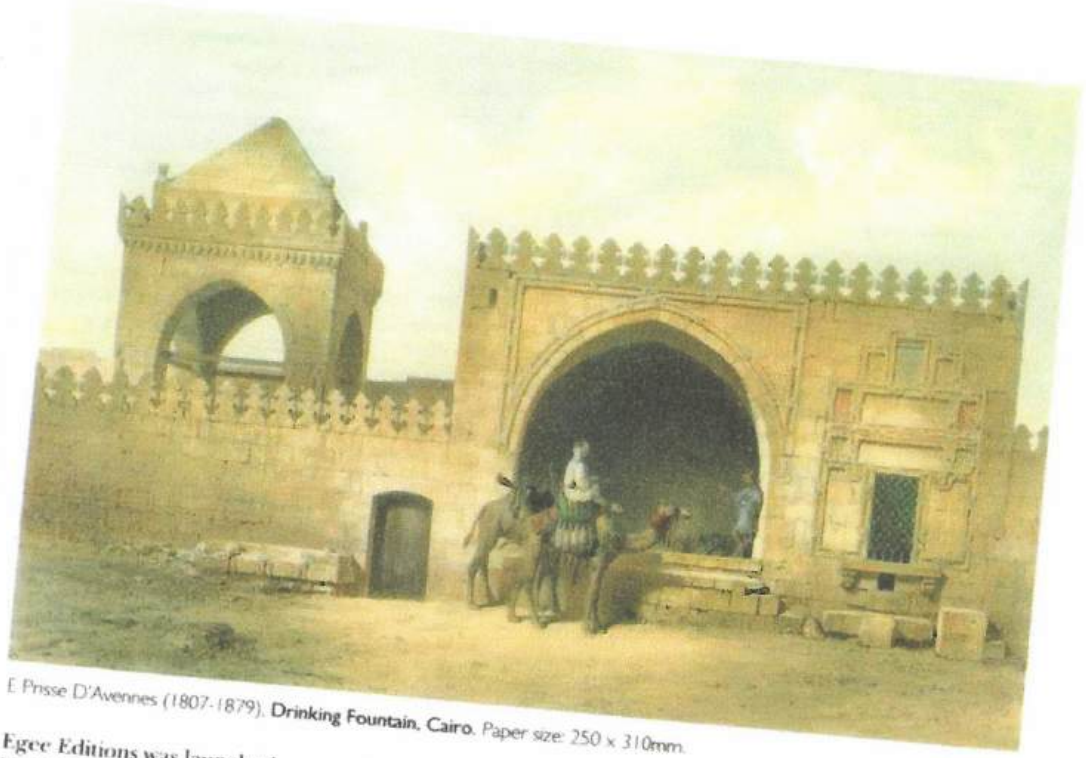
"I am interested to know of the Asia House project and strongly endorse the sentiment that British links with the Asia Pacific region need to be strengthened".
Sir Colin Marshall, Chairman - British Airways.

"I was very interested in your plans to create an Asia House in London. I would most certainly wish the V&A to be associated with it...."
Dame Elizabeth A L Esteve Coll, former Director - V&A

"...(Asia House) is something that is much needed especially against the background of the dramatic changes in Asia."
The Rt. Hon. Sir Richard Luce, DL
Vice-Chancellor, Buckingham University

EGEE EDITIONS:
Reproductions of Graphic Arts of the Islamic World

MARY RICHARDSON



E Prisse D'Avennes (1807-1879). **Drinking Fountain, Cairo.** Paper size: 250 x 310mm.

Egee Editions was launched in 1993 by the Egee Art consultancy (EAC) in London. EAC is a long established (1978) consultancy and art gallery specialising in Middle Eastern Arab and Islamic art. During the 1970's and 80's EAC's clients chose mainly fine original prints - contemporary and classic as well as paintings. As the population grew in numbers, an ever wider audience reached out for art. Not everyone wanted or could afford an original lithograph or a painting. Many wanted an attractive print for a modest sum.

By this time also, galleries had begun to spring up everywhere. Looking ahead, EAC decided to respond to this need. They started with six Count Forray images of Cairo, all but one sold out ew. They then moved on to einrich Von Mayrs. These ave been extremely ccessful, with wide interest the whole Muslim world. eems they are selling as skly in Kuala Lumpur as in adh!

In 1992 Egee Art consultancy decided to launch formally Egee Editions, with over 100 images. They have since added an additional 30 images to the range.

Since their client preference had always leaned heavily toward classical or Orientalists images, they started with that. However, the director Dale Egee's first love and art school training was in contemporary art and she is gradually increasing the collection of these. EAC carries both contemporary Muslim artists - Rachid Koreichi, Hassan Massoudy, Rachad Selim, and contemporary Europeans - Margaret Henderson, Patricia Al Fakhri and Christopher Harrison among others.

There is a strong preference for historical or ethnological images which reveal something about Islamic art and culture. Among these the favourites are the Emile Prisse d'Avennes images and Snouck Hurgronje Arabian Objects painted from everyday utensils found in Makkah in the 19th Century. Both Prisse d'Avennes (French) and Hurgronje (Dutch) converted to Islam and displayed a deep interest and respect for the culture. They left a valuable record. Fortunately this is now available in reproduction form.

When Egee Editions began, their market was so small it was felt 100 copies of each print would be sufficient. As many of these have nearly sold out, they have started to make their new editions larger, usually 250, for the ever increasing market.

The difference between a fine limited edition print and a mass produced "poster" is huge. The paper must be heavy enough not to buckle behind the glass. Egee uses heavy coated stock for fine detail, water-colour paper for softer images. The printing must be of maximum colourfastness. They insist on the top British standards.

The four- colour process must be meticulous. Colour separation or better yet, reproduction from the image itself onto computer must be done by a specialist firm. The four-colour screens through which the pictures are printed employ the finest mesh possible before ink clogging becomes a problem.

Most importantly, proofing – not once but twice or as many times as required, on different types of paper – must be meticulous. EAC printed their Rachad Selim map three times before Dale Egee was pleased with the result.

Finally, because framing is in its early stages in some of the countries EAC works in, they produce many of their prints with decorative borders printed on them. This way frame shops can just pop them into available frame mouldings.

Egee Art reports they continue to look for fine images to reproduce and ever finer techniques of producing them.

'Art In Action' Festival at Waterperry

STEPHEN PENDERGAST

In 1976, London was fortunate to be chosen to host the 'World of Islam Festival' the first great Islamic festival in Europe since an equally famous one in Munich in 1910. The 1976 festival was a magnificent, huge and unforgettable occasion; and what every visitor to that festival must have taken away with them, above all other memories, was the spirit which drew together and raised - the whole enterprise: the continual awareness of mankind as one, united under one God. This was reiterated in every branch of the festival exhibition - from medicine to philosophy to art; and it is this spirit of unity which has inspired the annual festival held in the third week of July for four days, *Art in Action*, from its first impulse, over eighteen subsequent years.

It was in fact the succeeding year, 1977, that a sculptor and teacher, Bernard Saunders, was watching a demonstration by craftsmen (a much rarer event in our colder Northern countries than is to be seen in the open workshops of warmer parts of the world!) in a museum; and he noted that, although there was considerable interest on the part of ordinary people in witnessing the magic of artistic creation 'as it happens' - that however, those at the back of the crowd couldn't see much!

Bernard Saunders was looking after a large country house with splendid gardens - Waterperry House, near Oxford - at the time, and he realised that there was the time and space available to use the estate to present a spacious, relaxed 'festival of artists and craftsmen' who could be watched at work, and talked to about their work and techniques, by the general public. He also realised that the school of philosophy at which he also taught could provide a large and willing unpaid workforce, without whom the event would be impossible to stage properly.

It was not at first easy to find artists of the highest quality who would be prepared to work with the public 'breathing over their shoulders' - craftsmen are more used to this, and just 'get on with it'; but painters and sculptors have to be lured out of their studios and 'ivory towers'!

Bernard Saunders was determined from the first to have only the finest artists and craftsmen; also to keep the price of everything, from the cost of entrance to the food available, down to reasonable 'family visit' costs; and above all, to make the occasion a happy, peaceful and memorable one for all: a four-day paradise on earth where the magic of human creation in the arts would reflect as fully as possible the divine magic of Creation itself.

And this it has become: participating artists and the public alike speak of the rare quality of peace and happiness that pervades *Art in Action* - even in the company of its regular annual attendance of over 22,000 over the four days. Every practical aspect of the festival, from the neat car-parking to adequate lavatories, aims at the highest standard, and contributes to the very special atmosphere to be experienced. Over 250 artists and craftsmen (craftswomen too) are to be watched at work and talked to; and there is a considerable number of regular annual visitors, who even plan their holidays to coincide with those four days in the third week in July when *Art in Action* is to be seen. And everything is geared as much to children as to grown-ups: from attractive, wholesome and inexpensive food to story-telling and the extremely popular practical classes in various arts and crafts under the direction of enthusiastic teachers.

From the first year - when Bernard Saunders sat there wondering if anyone at all would come! – there has been a constant aim to improve, refine, and expand *Art in Action*: preparation now goes on throughout the year, and the public's comments are sought. For instance, some people want to see different craftsmen each year: but others come and watch one year, go home and think about what they would like to commission as a 'one-off' work of art for their own home, and come back the next year with a precise request for a work from the craftsman they talked to and watched the previous year. And the demonstrating craftsmen, too, learn how to meet the public; for some who work alone throughout the year, this becomes a very happy 'working holiday'. Nevertheless, it is impossible to convey the unique atmosphere of *Art in Action* to anyone who has not experienced it for themselves. The range of work on view needs a day to see: paintings, sculpture, printmaking, ceramics, glass, illustration, calligraphy, metalwork, jewellery, textiles, woodwork, music; and now, art from the Orient and from Islam.

One vital way in which mankind preserves its sense of unity is through traditional forms - of art, as well as of society and culture. There is a movement in several nations and countries towards the preservation, continuation, and development of traditional forms of art - some of them needing to be rediscovered. So *Art in Action* responded enthusiastically to this, welcoming first Oriental art, music and dancing then the arts of Islam.

For many years now, the Islamic Arts section has been a unique and popular feature of *Art in Action* - more so each year as more Europeans visit Islamic countries. The organiser of this section, Martin Bloomfield, travels all over the Islamic world to find artists and craftsmen; as a result, practically every Islamic nation has had representatives at *Art in Action*. In 1995, there were 11 demonstrators continually working at their craft skill and talking to the visitors.

Hikmet Barutoigil is at the centre of the movement in Turkey to recover tradition: rediscovering and practising the ancient techniques of ebru (marbling), with a strong sense that, as he says, "the roots of our culture need to be watered". Hikmet is one of a group of artists working to do this; and his demonstrations make one of the most effective and attractive features of *Art in Action:* with his water-tank in front of him, between him and the audience, he invites a child from the crowd to try the technique, floating the colours on the surface of the water and inducing patterns; thus people can watch a newcomer to the art under the instruction of an expert - the perfect art performance! And from that, people can easily follow Hikmet's own subtle developments of the art - which has now led him to remarkable results with the emotional treatment of handicapped children!

The Prince of Wale's Institute of Architecture is becoming famous world-wide for its similar concern for tradition in all cultures: its Visual Islamic and Traditional Arts Course - the only post-graduate course of its kind in the world, though surely to be the first of many

art produced across the Islamic world. Some of the recent and forthcoming lectures are listed here:

18 October 1995:
Elaine Wright – The planning and production of miniatures in the Shahnama of Ibrahim Sultan ibn Shahrukh.

8 November 1995:
Jere Bacharach – Umayyad building activities in Greater Syria: another interpretation.

6 December 1995:
Ursula Dreibholz - Early Islamic bookbindings found in the Great Mosque in San'a'.

17 January 1996:
Michael Spink – A keyhole view of the collections of the Mughal emperors.

7 February 1996:
Mehrdad Shokoohy – Persian influence on Indian town plans.

6 March 1996:
Marco Brambilla – Sultaniyya and Ilkhanid tomb towers.

1 May 1996:
Teresa Fitzherbert – More thoughts on the Freer 'Tabari'.

5 June 1996:
Ebadollah Bahari - Bihzad the master painter, roots and branches.

Other events planned for the future include a visit to 'The Little Hall' in Suffolk, the home of the Gayer-Anderson brothers on their return from Cairo, and an exhibition drawn from members' collections.

London is well placed to host a society of people interested in Islamic art. It has important national collections at the Victoria and Albert Museum, the British Museum and the British Library and two excellent university collections at the Ashmolean and Fitzwilliam Museums just a short train journey away. It has numerous temporary exhibition venues, including the new Brunei Gallery. It is the centre of the Islamic art market and there are several courses in Islamic art and archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies. Members of the Islamic Art Circle include museum curators, university lecturers, students, collectors, artists, dealers and individuals who have acquired an interest in Islamic art through travel or some other way. All are welcome. Membership applications: The Honorary Secretary, Islamic Art Circle, Department of Oriental Antiquities, British Museum, WC1B 3DG.

The American University in Cairo Press

Thirty five years of English-Language Publishing

AUC Press Guides & Giftbooks

New

The Animal World of the Pharaohs
Patrick F. Houlihan
189 illus, 35 color
Hardback, $ 50.00

Islamic Monuments in Cairo
A Practical Guide
Caroline Williams
55 illus, 16 maps
Paperback, $ 25.00

The Complete Tutankhamun
The King, The Tomb, The Royal Treasure
Nicholas Reeves
519 illus, 65 color
Hardback, $ 50.00

Alexandria
Michael Haag
95 color photographs
Paperback, $ 35.00

Life of the Ancient Egyptians
Eugen Strouhal
Photographs by Werner Forman
289 illus, 219 color
Hardback, $ 42.50

Khan al-Khalili
A Comprehensive Mapped Guide
to Cairo's Historic Bazaar
Ola Seif
Paperback, $ 15.00

Contemporary Egyptian Art
Liliane Karnouk
160 color illus
Hardback, $ 75.00

The American University in Cairo Press, 113 Sharia Kasr elAini , Cairo, Egypt.
AUC Press Fax: 20-2-3557565 , tel: 20-2-357 6891,4,5,6 AUC Bookstore, tel: 20-2-357 5377

The Islamic Art Circle, London

RACHEL WARD

The Islamic Art Circle was launched in 1964 by Edmund de Unger. He wished to create a small society for people interested in Islamic art to meet, listen to lectures, visit private and public collections and generally raise public awareness about the subject. In the summer of 1964 he arranged a party for about 50 potential members of such a society at the Ritz. The idea received enthusiastic support from those present and the first committee of the Islamic Art Circle was formed on the spot, with Edmund de Unger as President, Jeremy Hill as Secretary and Treasurer, and Peter Harris as Member of the Committee. Founder members included Basil Gray, Ralph Pinder-Wilson and Douglas Barrett of the British Museum, Robert Charleston, Basil Robinson and Robert Skelton of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Geza Fehervari, lecturer at the School of Oriental and African Studies, Miss Godman, daughter of the collector Frederick DuCane Godman, the collectors Raymond Ades and Gerald Reitlinger.

1965, the first year of organised activities, included a visit to the Godman collection of ceramics at Horsham in Surrey and to the reserve collections of the British Museum with Basil Gray, who entertained members to tea at the Official House on the premises of the British Museum afterwards. The following year there was a visit to Raymond Ades' collection at the Gables, Surrey, and a tour of the Islamic collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum followed by a sherry party at the Rembrandt Hotel opposite. There were also two meetings arranged at the School of Oriental and African Studies, courtesy of Dr Geza Fehervari, the beginning of a long association with that institution. One was a specimen meeting where members showed and discussed their 'problem' pieces. The other was a lecture on the recent Iznik excavations by Dr. Oktay Aslanapa, Professor of History of Art at the University of Istanbul.

Activities soon became more varied and more frequent. Between 1967 and 1970 there were many lectures, visits to Edmund de Unger's collection at 4, The Keir, Wimbledon, the Godman collection again, tours of new exhibitions at the Royal Academy, Victoria and Albert Museum, a trip to Oxford to visit the Science Museum and the Ashmolean, and another trip to Cambridge to be shown around the Fitzwilliam by Ralph Pinder-Wilson. In 1968, a group of members of the Islamic Art Circle travelled to Iran and attended the International Congress of Persian Art and Archaeology in Tehran.

In 1969, with the active support of the Director, John Pope-Hennessy, the Islamic Art Circle arranged an exhibition of some of its members' early Islamic ceramics at the Victoria and Albert Museum, called Islamic Pottery 800-1400 AD. . Edmund de Unger, Robert Charleston and Ralph Pinder-Wilson formed the selection committee and travelled the country together to choose suitable objects for display. An illustrated catalogue of the exhibition was compiled by Ralph Pinder-Wilson and financed by the Islamic Art Circle. A lecture by Dr. Geza Fehervari entitled 'Early Islamic Pottery' coincided with the opening on 1st October and Pope-Hennessy gave a small party for members at the museum.

Building on the success of the exhibition at the Victoria and Albert Museum, a second exhibition was organised at the Bristol City Art Gallery in 1971, curated by Peter Hardie. Entitled 'Arts of the Islamic Book', it included manuscripts and book bindings as well as examples of calligraphy on textiles, pottery and metalwork. In an early attempt at multi-media, a recording of the Shahnameh played in the background - until the spool to spool tape broke! Both exhibitions were well attended and contributed to a growing interest in Islamic art which culminated in the World of Islam Festival in London in 1976.

The exhibitions marked a new stage in the development of the Islamic Art Circle as more people applied to join the society. Previously a person desiring to join the group had to be proposed by a member and membership was restricted to about 50 people to facilitate visits to collections. In 1969 it was decided to abandon the policy of limiting members and the membership expanded rapidly to more than one hundred people.

Throughout the 1960s, the Islamic Art Circle had a peripatetic existence. It met in members' houses, the refectory or small teaching rooms at SOAS, the Royal Asiatic Society at 56 Queen Anne Street, the Rembrandt Hotel in Knightsbridge and even in the Mason's Arms, a pub in Maddox Street. As the society grew, it became more difficult to find meeting rooms large enough to hold all the members and in 1971, when John Burton-Page, Reader in Indian Art and Archaeology at the School of Oriental and African Studies, became Chairman and Geza Fehervari took over the Secretaryship, the regular meeting place moved to its present permanent location in the School of Oriental and African Studies.

Geza Fehervari had been active in the society since the beginning and it was he, first as Treasurer and then as Chairman of the Islamic Art Circle, who arranged for SOAS to provide free use of a seminar room or lecture theatre, charging only for the expenses of the projectionist. In return, SOAS students are allowed to attend the lectures and the Chairman of the society, presently Professor Michael Rogers, is a professor at SOAS. Latterly this relationship between the Islamic Art Circle and SOAS has been recognised in a formal association with the Centre of Near and Middle Eastern Studies.

Presently the Islamic Art Circle has nearly one hundred and fifty individual members (including several who have been members since 1964) and four corporate members. It costs £12 per annum for individuals and £60 per annum for corporate members. Last year the Islamic Art Circle introduced a reduced rate membership of £9 per annum for individuals who are already members of the Indian Art Circle or the Oriental Rug and Textile Society, which has proved very popular with members of each of these societies.

Members are sent an annual newsletter with the lecture list for the forthcoming year and a list of other relevant events. Members meet regularly at the eight lectures organised each year in the lecture theatre of the School of Oriental and African Studies, Thornhaugh Street, WC1 at 6.00pm. These are followed by drinks in the lobby outside the lecture theatre and members are welcome to accompany the speaker out to dinner at a local restaurant afterwards. The lectures are on a broad range of subjects reflecting the great variety of

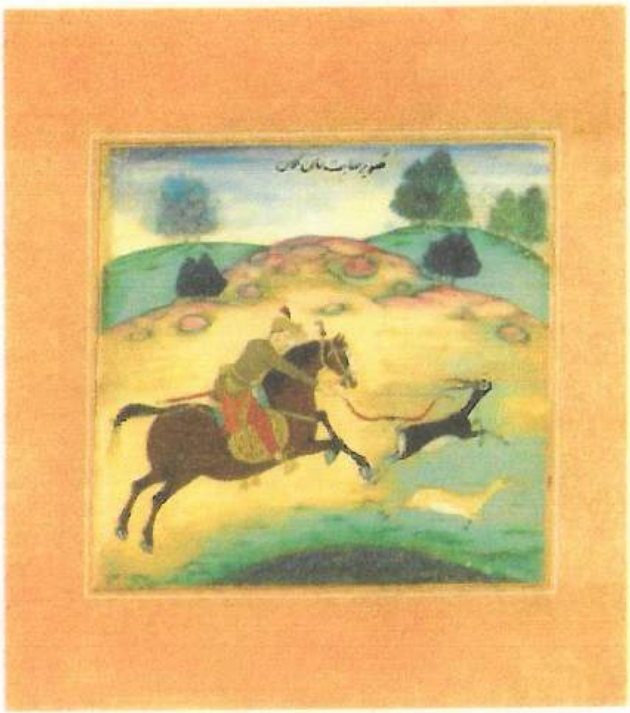
The Dianoor Mughal Collection

KARI STAUBO









Top, left: A Quatrefoil Box and Cover, mutton-fat jade with gold inlay, set with rubies, yellow sapphires and carved jade. Mughal, 18th Century. Width: 9.8cm **Above: Oval Box,** gold decorated in safed chalwan enamel, the lid and sides set with rose-cut and flat-cut diamonds. Mughal, 18th Century. 5 x 11cm **Top, right: Necklace**, gold, flat-cut diamonds with alternating emerald and ruby drops and Basra pearls. The reverse decorated with safed chalwan enamelling. Hyderabad, 18th Century. Length: 30cm **Right: Mahabat Khan On Horseback Chasing Blackbuck Across a Hillside,** opaque Watercolour and Gold on paper. Mughal, Period of Jahangir, circa 1620AD. Published: Delhi Museum of Archaeology. Loan Exhibition of Antiquities, Coronation Durbar, 1911, Delhi, 1911,pl XLIV (c),p.104. Mahabat Khan (son of Ghor Beg of Kabul) was one of the most eminent nobles of the reign of Jahangir. In 1626 he temporarily abducted the Emperor, to combat the intrigues of the Empress Nur Jahan. Under Shah Jahan he became governor of Delhi and received the title Khan Khanan. He died in 1634.

The Dianoor Collection focuses on the artistic achievements of the Mughal Empire. A recent exhibition held at the Dianoor showrooms in New Bond Street, London, offered the public a fascinating view of Mughal jewellery and gems.

Items from the Collection displayed included an emerald carved and shaped to resemble a leaf, decorated with a flowering plant on the reverse weighing approximately 133 carats, which dates from the 17th century. Enamelled objects were also represented as well as exceptional examples of carved and inlaid jade, paintings and arms. Throughout was a conscious effort on behalf of the collector Iqbal Mubarak to reveal the range of styles which co-existed on the Indian sub-continent, from the intricate gold jewellery of South India, to the sophisticated use of gems and enamelling of Hyderabad, to the exquisite pieces which came out of the imperial workshops.

What becomes evident when viewing the collection in its entirety, is that the Mughal style as it reached its zenith under the rule of Shah Jahan was not insular. Rather it represents the confluence of Islamic and Hindu traditions, articulating how the two invigorated each other to unequalled splendour in their mutual effort to satisfy the Mughals' love of ornament.

It was first at the court of Humayun, the second Mughal emperor, that the style became infused with elements adopted from Persia as well as the West. Gradually features of both began manifesting themselves in the choice of materials, decorative motifs, designs and techniques.

The period of Shah Jahan's rule (1628-1656AD) perhaps best articulates the Great Mughals' superior power and wealth. His predilection for gems is represented in the collection with a 184.86 carat spinal ruby engraved with his name and the names of Jahangir and Akbar, dated 1046H (1636AD).

The few surviving pieces directly attributable to this reign reveal a mature Mughal style. A carved rock crystal vessel in the shape of an open lotus blossom displays the inherent naturalistic elements present in Mughal Art. The distinctive floral pattern which first gained prominence during Akbar's patronage becomes a recurring theme. Enamelled work as well as objects of inlaid jade echo the richness of the pietra dura decorations found on his architectural monuments such as the Taj Mahal. The lavish use of colour, the inclination towards natural forms, and the extravagant use of gemstones were qualities which endured well into the eighteenth century despite the asceticism which followed with the accession of Aurangzeb.

A quatre-foil mutton-fat jade box inlaid with gemstones dated to the 18th century was most certainly worked in the imperial workshops. Jade reflects the Dynasty's Timurid origins and was the hardstone material most commonly used. This is an exceptional example of Mughal refinement and bears the emblematic floral motif.

In addition to showing how the Mughal style developed and the influences which enriched it, the Dianoor Collection contains examples which hail the achievements of the craftsmen who created them. Since the days when Akbar formally established the system of Imperial patronage, the Great Mughals spurred the workshops to create pieces of unrivalled perfection. It was customary for the emperor to visit the workshops to observe the various stages of production: for the pleasure was not merely in owning an object as it was presented to him in its completed state, but to witness the transformation from raw material into a work of art of unsurpassed beauty.

Problems *of* **Art Education** *in the* **Islamic World**

PROCEEDINGS OF THE 3RD INTERNATIONAL SEMINAR ON ISLAMIC ARTS

Organised by the
Royal Society of Fine Arts, Amman
and the Islamic Arts Foundation, London
from 18-20 October 1988 in Amman, Jordan.

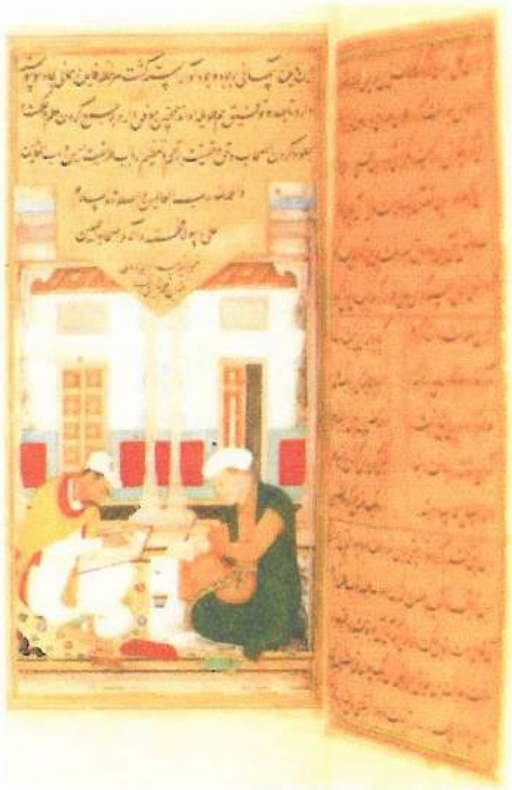
35 Working Papers
(28 in English and 7 in Arabic)
by Scholars from the Islamic World and the West.

Published jointly by the Ministry of Culture
and the Royal Society of Fine Arts.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT
ROYAL SOCIETY OF FINE ARTS
P O BOX 9068 AMMAN JORDAN TEL 630128 FAX 651119
or
ISLAMIC ARTS FOUNDATION
144-146 KING'S CROSS ROAD LONDON WC1X 9DH
TEL +44 171 833 8275 FAX +44 171 278 4797

The 1995 Islamic Art Week in London

PATRICIA JELLICOE



Above: Mughal manuscript "Hadiqat al-Haqiqat" **Opposite page:** "Wonders of creation. Pictures courtesy Bonhams

Generally speaking, the 1995 Islamic Art Week in London left most people happy and optimistic over the future. However, as is becoming more and more obvious, really good pieces are successful; outstanding and rare pieces fetch correspondingly high prices. Middle of the road items are unsold. This will of course present an increasing problem for auction houses and dealers as good pieces are becomingly increasingly hard to find.

Bonhams were particularly pleased with their sale of jewellery which they felt was the best collection on offer during the week. They were disappointed by their glass sales, but the market for glass is a difficult one and not many are interested. However, for a small and newly emerging Islamic department, Bonhams feel they are doing well and their clients appreciate the consequently easy access.

Christie's sold 78.99% i.e. 79% at their Islamic miniatures, manuscripts and objects sale on Tuesday 17th October resulting in £1.02 million or £1.16 including Buyers' Premium. A Shahnameh of Ferdowsi signed and dated AH 969/1561-2 AD by Muhammad al-Qiwami al-Shirazi, one of the very best scribes of this Shiraz period, and containing 28 full page illustrations, sold for £105,000 (Estimate: £60,000-£80,000); a rare early Islamic lacquered wooden cylindrical box from Mamluk Egypt or Syria of the 14th-15thc had a fine typically Mamluk design, but unfortunately its principal inscription not being legible was probably a deterrent. However, it sold for £25,000.

Sales are notoriously unpredictable and unlike the previous sale, almost all the pottery pieces were sold this time. While there is a mass of second rate glass, a beautiful post Sassanian light blue wheel-cut glass bottle from Persia c 8thc – an excellent classical type – sold for £70,000 (Estimate: £25,000-£35,000). An Iznik pottery jug from the third quarter of the 16thc, painted simply in white on a light cobalt blue background, sold for £8,000 (Estimate £2,500-£3,500). An Iznik pottery dish c 1580, of white & green prunus blossoms and tulips on a most unusual salmon-pink ground, sold for £58,000 (Estimate £15,000-25,000). A suite of Golden Horde turquoise inset gold jewellery from 14thc Central Asia in excellent condition but for a few missing turquises, sold for £72,000 (Estimate: $40,000-£50,000). A Mongol Persian parcel gilt silver dish c 14thc, its decoration showing Chinese influences with lotus and vine, sold for £41,000 (Estimate: £25,000-35,000).

The most successful of all pieces was surely a massive gold and silver inlaid brass bowl from Mamluk Egypt or Syria c.1351-54AH. Though bowls of this shape are quite common in Mamluk metalwork, the size of this is exceptional, the traces of gold and silver inlay indicate its destination as a noble of great wealth. It is thought it was probably made for a follower of Sultan Salah al-Din. Estimated at £30,000-£40,000, it sold for £100,000. (The European family who had owned it for some hundred years had used it as a log basket...)

The carpets sale at Christie's was very solid with just on 70% sold for £470,000.

Sotheby's sales amounted to £711,600 net with 24.6% unsold. A brass jug and lid from 12/13thc Persia estimated at £9,000-£11,000 sold for £15,000. A Hamadan stone relief from NW Persia c 13thc with the figure of a man and a stylised lion amid rosettes brings to 11 the number of recorded reliefs of this type. Estimated at £6,000-8,000 it sold for £14,000. A small stone figure of a sheep from Egypt or Syria of the 10th/12thc sold for £6,000 (Estimate £2,000-£3,0000). A superb pair of signed Timurid wooden doors by Shams'Ud-Din from Persia dated AH –/1458-9 AD were sold for £45,000 (Estimate: £20,000-£30,000). The sale of contemporary Indian paintings brought double or treble the estimates for most: George Keyt's "Recumbent Woman estimated at £1,500-£2,000 brought £6,000. In fact all his paintings sold well above estimates. Clare Burton's oil portrait of the Nawab Muhammed Khan V of Bahawalpur estimated at £3,500-£4,500 sold for £14,000.

At Sotheby's sale of manuscripts most sold well either around their estimates or above. A Qur'an section, an Arabic manuscript in gold muhaqqaq script on paper from Mamluk Egypt c1300-50, sold for £24,000 (Estimate: £14,000-£18,000). A Persian manuscript on paper with five coloured diagrams, copied by the author himself, and dated AH 813/1411 AD, the tashrih Mansuri (Anatomy of Mansur) is one of the most famous treatises on the human body. This copy is autographed by the author himself, Mansur Ibn-Muhammed al-Balkhi. (Sold for £13,000 it was estimated at £6,000-8,000). A Mughal illuminated fine calligraphy c1590-1600 by Muhammad Husain al-Kashmiri Zarin Qalam and others estimated at £30,000-£40,000, sold for £50,000. There were 56 examples of the pen of Muhammad Husain al-Kashmiri Zarin Qalam

Visual Islamic and Traditional Arts Degree Show

SHAHZAD SHEIKH

The 1995 Degree Show of the Visual Islamic and Traditional Arts Department of The Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture was the first since it transferred there from the Royal College of Art in October 1993.

The work exhibited, at the Rebecca Hossack Gallery in Central London, was vivid and varied ranging from grand wood inlays, exquisite arabesque wedding dress embroidery patterns, tiles, stained glass and even intriguing fully assembled astrolabes showing the latitude plate for London. All the exhibits, fine examples of what HRH The Prince of Wales has called cultural continuity, were the work of five students who have just completed the two year MA Course. The skill and beauty of their work illustrated their dedication and commitment to their chosen areas of specialisation.

With Professor Critchlow as Director and Paul Marchant as Deputy Director, the Department has now completed two years in its new location, and strives to continue its commitment to the integrity of both the practice and theory of learning the visual Islamic arts and the arts of the other great Traditions of the world.

In the first year of the VITA Course, all the MA students attend classes in a variety of traditional skills including geometry, islimi (arabesque) and calligraphy (the three principal "languages" of Islamic art), as well as techniques shared by the other great traditions such as letter-carving in stone, architectural drawing and painting skill - for example gesso, pigments, gold-leaf and so on. The work displayed, most of which was available for sale, showed the individual responses of each student to these classes and the wide variety of techniques and crafts employed.

Two Kundekari (wood inlay) panels, one after a window shutter from a 12th century mosque, and two screens based on the Shrine of Semseddin of Tabriz, Konya, from the 13th century, were done by Filiz Civale-Uyar. Geometric patterned embroidery and painted floral and arabesque designs, including patterns for a three slit-seam wedding dress and gold plated thread embroidery on silk velvet from Bindalli jacket, were by Selma De Margary. Thirteen different pieces by Ashley Manning, including etched prints, illuminations and a gilded wood celestial sphere, showed off his multi-skilled talents. Abdelkrim Kebir specialises in stained glass and also exhibited carved plaster work, zellij and fused glass, and John Matineau in his *Book of Discoveries* demonstrated his remarkable research into the Geometry of the Solar System; he also exhibited a series of engravings which, using compasses and straight edge, show a geometric solution for the orbits of the planets.

Integrity, discipline and commitment to, not just the learning process, but also the very values inherent within the traditional skills, is demonstrated by the VITA students. An understanding of the culture and background of the traditions and the timeless values they represent are actively encouraged by the department, so that the work may be supported in context, rather than stand on its own as intriguing and inspiring, but ultimately without any authoritative value. The contemplative nature of, for instance, the careful execution of a geometric design is a lesson in itself showing that the resulting intricate and subtle pattern is *not* simply decorative but becomes beauty embodied by the human hand and thereby experienced by the heart. Devoid of the modern distinction between "Fine Art" and "Craft", the artist in a traditional society was someone who practised an art of a craft and, in the words of Rene Guenon, "his activity was bound up with the principles of a much more profound order".

A more valuable output of the VITA Department's efforts is a clear demonstration of how students from different backgrounds and traditions can work well together, learning from each other's knowledge and experience, and, most importantly, through the study of the objective language of geometry, can understand the universal basis underlying the art and the architecture of the great Traditions of the world - be it Islamic, Christian, Buddhist, North American Indian or Hindu.

Connoisseur Gallery Relocated

SALAMA KHAJA

After a short break allowing for its relocation, the Connoisseur Gallery, previously based in Mayfair, re-opened at Holland Street in Kensington, within walking distance from High Street Kensington underground station. The owner, Mr Makram Irani, held a gala reception at the new premises.

One of the most experienced Islamnic Art dealers in London, his clients iinclude buyers, collectors and enthusiasts from all over the Middle East and Europe; the Germans particularly showing a keen interest. He has currently on offer a number of 19th century oil paintings, including those by the German artist Bauernfeind. An earlier sale at Christie's of a painting by this artist fetched £250,000, signalling a revival in the market. Other oil canvases in his collection celebrate the sumptuous splendour of Oriental themes.

The Gallery has been extremely strong on etchings and lithographs: detailed studies of Greco-Roman classical ruins in Egypt, Jordan and Lebanon abound . In addition there are delicate pencil studies of 'domestic' Bedouin life and landscape. Mr Irani currently holds a number of exceptionally fine colour lithographs by the 19th century Orientalist, David Roberts.

Makram Irani's main passion is for Islamic manuscripts and he plans to devote a forthcoming exhibition to this area. Amongst the small collection recently on display were leaves from a 13th/14th century Andalucian Qur'anic manuscript in Kufic script; also an 18th century Turkish manuscript in Maghriby script, the surah exquisitely encased in a surroubd of gold arabesque. A pair of leaves from a 17th century Persian book of fables 'Shahnama' in Naskhi script, included an illustration of two 'fabulous' dragons devouring each other, baited on by two male figures in each corner.

The re-opening of the Connoisseur Gallery is warmly welcomed as it reclaims its rightful place amongst London-based art dealerships specialising in Islamic art.

continued from page 63

located in a palace built by Moulay Ismail in the 17th century as his residence. Of special note in the Museum is an exhibit reproducing a splendid 19th century salon with braziers of pierced brass, and carpets, couches, curtains and pillows covered with gold embroidered silk. Other rooms contain the Museum's collections of old Qur'ans, Berber and Arab jewellery, armour, pottery, musical instruments and a fine display of regional carpets and kilims. Full costumes represent the unique identity of the regions and are displayed on faceless wire mannequins with traditional jewellery, head and foot adornment. Glazed coloured ceramic tiles on display date from the 13th century and mounted photographs help in the identification of the displays. Local carpets are shown in a room which used to be the palace mosque.

Archaeological Museum
The Museum is small but important. It contains Roman, Phoenician and Carthaginian artefacts. Founded in 1986, the Museum has been enlarged to meet growing need. It contains artefacts from the Palaeolithic period to the Neolithic (4000 BC) as well as objects from Islamic sites. A large portion of the collection is Roman and pre-Roman Hellenistic style bronzes. The Roman bronzes, mainly from Volubilis and dating from the First and Second Centuries AD are displayed in a separate annex from the two-storey entrance galleries. Also represented are bronzes from Chellah and the colonies of Banasa and Thamusida.
There are several significant pieces from Volubilis such as the bronze figures of a dog and a rider, a standing young man crowned with ivy, several marble heads of young Berbers, portrait heads of Cato the Younger and (very probably) Juba II who was among the last rulers before imperial rule and who was married to Cleopatra Selene, daughter of Antony and Cleopatra.
Three other museums in Rabat deserve short mention. They are the National Artisan Museum which displays traditional contemporary crafts; the Postal Museum, founded in 1970 and located in the PTT ministerial building which is open during office hours and contains a stamp collection, telephones and telegraph machines, and the Natural Science Museum in the Ministry of Energy and Mining which features a Sauropod dinosaur skeleton.

MEKNES
The Dar Jamai Museum, the Museum of Moroccan Art
Built in 1882 as the residence of the Jamai family, it was then used as a military hospital after 1912, becoming the Museum in 1920. The interior is elaborately decorated with painted wood, tile and carved plaster. The rooms contain crafts from the region of the Middle Atlas - wearing, embroidery and pottery, a collection of silver Berber jewellery, leather work, iron keys and locks, brass and copperware, furniture and wood carving.
The Museum has both Fez and Meknes pottery from the 17th century to more contemporary times - those pieces from Meknes elaborately multi-coloured and those from Fez in their typical blue and white. Also strong are the examples of Middle and High Atlas carpet and kilims and an unusual small collection of miniature paintings made in Meknes. In the central part of the Museum is a garden and in rooms nearby are the silk banner used by Sultan Moulay Hassan for his campaigns (1874-87) and an exhibit of Qur'ans.

SAFI
The National Ceramics Museum
The Museum is housed in the unadorned Kechla fortress, a citadel built by the Portuguese in the 16th century. At the entrance are two cannon cast in the Hague. In the extensive interior spaces are displays of engraved, stamped, moulded and painted ceramics. On the left side of the building, the pottery made in Safi extends in cases down a long sequence or rooms. The older pottery from sites such as Meknes and Fez is displayed in additional rooms around the courtyard. One can appreciate the continuity of artistic production from comparison of the basic shapes, colours and regional designs of the past to the more contemporary ware. Safi is a well known contemporary ceramic making centre, its pottery is the most commonly exported and it is distinguished by heavy green or blue glazes.

MARRAKESH
The Dar Si Said Museum
This Museum of Moroccan Arts contains an eclectic mix of arts and crafts, including many examples of embroidery and weaving - carpets by Berbers of the High Atlas mountains; the Glaoui and the Ait-Ouaouizarht and Arab tribes of the plain: the Rehamna and the Oulad Bou Sbaa. They vary in age, design and craftsmanship. On the ground floor are indigenous costumes from many different regions and a salon filled with carved and decorated cedar furniture. There are cases of Berber jewellery with silver filigree pins, brooches, chains, enamelled and stone set bracelets as well as displays of military equipment, carved and engraved powder horns, swords and even more mundane metalware which has been decorated and embellished. The collection includes a rectangular marble basin from the Ben Youssef medersa, originally made for a vizier of the Umayyad Caliph of Cordoba in the 11th century. It is unusual because of its figurative, almost Baroque carving of vegetation, heraldic bird heads and griffins - an inscription records its Cordoba origin.
The interior is enhanced by carved cedar doors and screens and there is an impressive collection of window frames around the courtyard. Of interest also are the carved and painted bride-box chairs and massive wooden fairground swings - or Ferris wheel chairs.

The Maison Tiskiwin
The Maison Tiskiwin is a private museum which houses folk art and objects of the material culture of Morocco. It was founded by the Dutch anthropologist and art historian Bert Flint, who worked for over 30 years in Morocco. This town house, built at the turn of the century, features costume, jewellery, carpets and fabrics from many different northern and central Moroccan artistic centres including Tangier, Chefchaouen, Meknes, Fez, Beni Mellai and Kehnifra. His collection of popular art from the Souss valley and the Saharan region are in a museum in Agadir.

The Majorelle Museum
This Museum of Islamic Arts (closed Mondays) was founded by two generations of artists. It contains the small but impressive collection of its present owner, the French couturier Yves Saint-Laurent. The displays of carpets are monumental, the furniture and cases of ceramics and metalwork, including an ornate astrolabe, invite contemplation. A small room at the end contains an exhibit of Jacques Majorelle's paintings – subtle landscapes of serenity, local scenes and cityscapes which include the Kasbah of Ait Benhaddow, near Quarzazate. The ambience, display techniques and quality of the works create a visual feast.

Competing with the Museum for beauty is the surrounding garden filled with giant bamboo, agave, yucca, papyrus, palm, cypress, philodendron, bouganvillaea and huge cactus. The building itself is painted an unforgettable electric royal blue.

The richness of Moroccan heritage is apparent in its museums which are continuing the tradition of reverence,

(Golden Pen), the greatest calligrapher at the atelier of the Mughal Emperor Akbar. An exquisite small leaf from an Album of Prince Dara Shiko has a miniature portrait of the Emperor Humayun; on the reverse the calligraphy is by Prince Dora Shikoh c1630. Touchingly evocative of two unfortunate Mughal princes, it sold for £15,000 (Estimated at £8,000-£12,000).

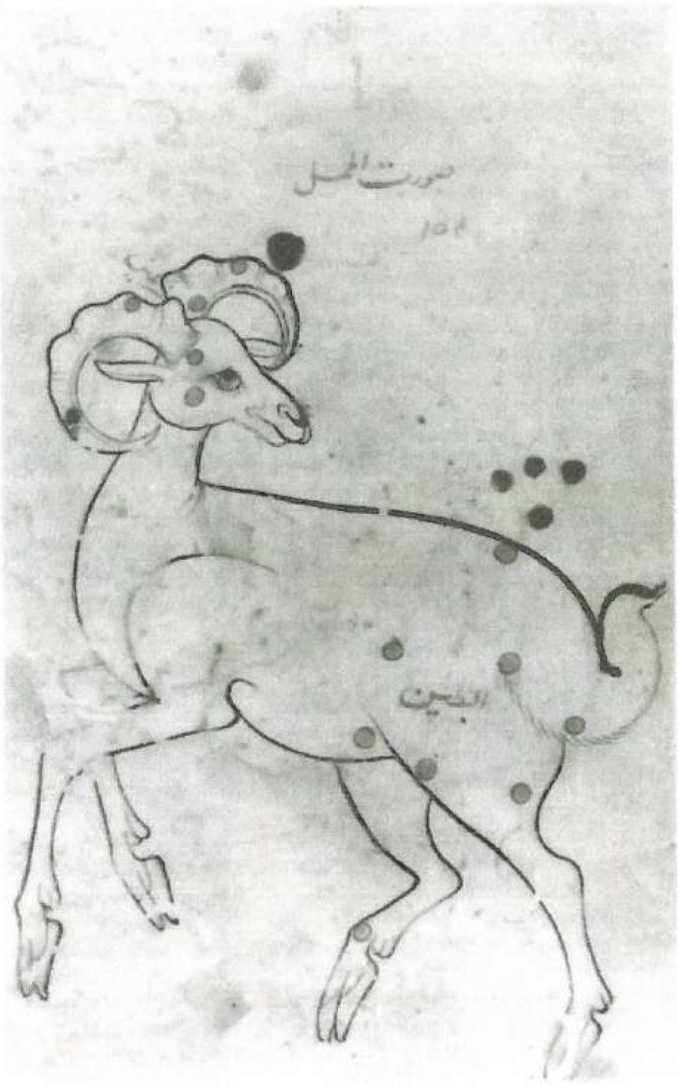
A signal and extraordinary pleasure was to see one of the few paintings by one of the great masters of Mughal painting, Mansur, still in existence, though the Emperor Jahangir had commissioned him to paint "over 100 paintings" of the flowers, birds and animals in which he thus increasingly specialised. This is of a brown antelope, its head turned, and a foreleg raised, is in Mansur's distinctive small script in the bottom right hand corner "A'mal-i Nadir al-Asr Mansur Jahangir Shahi." On the reverse the calligraphy reveals that this painting was once in a Royal Mughal album; the style of mounting and illumination is very close to pages of calligraphy in the Kevorkian Album, now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. Estimated at £20,000-£30,000, it sold for £50,000.

A great deal of excitement and interest had been caused by the appearance of a life-size portrait of the Emperor Jahangir, owned by a European noble family since at least the mid 19thc. A dazzling painting in gouache with gold on fine cotton, the jewellery in raised relief, Jahangir is seated on a chair in embroidered tunic and patka, surrounded by a golden mandorla and holding a globe. A very detailed and historically interesting evaluation of the painting is given in the Catalogue by Marcus Fraser, pointing out a late 18thc European backing and canvas, the likeness to Abul Hasan's portraits and the inscription stating that the painting was "completed during the years of the victory over the Deccan" (AD 1617/8). Though books of miniatures became more popular during Jahangir's reign, Akbar's atelier of painters produced a great many large paintings on cotton to be hung on wall. This painting, together with two large Qajar canvases at £18,000 each, was bought by a Swiss lawyer acting for clients. Estimated at £300,000-£500,000, it was sold for £520,000.

Sotheby's carpets enjoyed their best sale since March 1990 resulting in £1,452,552, 4.5% higher). An Indi-Portuguese 18thc embroidered Coverlet from western India, estimated between £5 and £7,000, sold for £7,800 (£8,970). Another for the Portuguese market of the 17thc in crimson, saffron and ivory silks with a central-roundel of a pelican feeding its young surrounded by a ring of birds and scrolling vines and mermaids in the end panels and a border of huntsmen pursuing boar and deer, sold for £7,200 (£8,280). An Azerbaijan carpet of the late 18thc from the Joseph Rittman collection estimated at £28,000 sold for £32,200; it was an intriguing stylistic link with 17thc Azerbaijan embroideries and later Caucasian weavings. A Star Kazak rug from the same collection estimated at £50,000 sold for £56,500. Approximately 40 Star Kazaks have now been identified and are considered amongst the grandest.

And most covetable of all Caucasian weavings, a Kum Kapi silk and brocaded prayer rug from Istanbul sold for £43,300, the highest for silks. Both an Axminister and a ziegler carpet (Patrick Cobbold's sold well.

Pink's, whose imaginative decor was an attractive background for an array of very find objects, have found that high quality pays. A Mamluk 14thc gold pendant with a central cabochon garnet was sold. A large and striking 19thc ruby necklace from Jaipur with a central row of individually carved rubies depicting flower petals, diamonds and pearls interspersed and hung with pendents, while the reverse of the necklace was enamelled in green, red and white in a floral design, was sold to a private family to be worn. An extremely fine Ottoman Turkish cabinet box of the late 17th-early 18thc, of wood inlaid with mother-of-pearl, tortoiseshell, ivory and ebony went to a Middle Eastern buyer with several other pieces. One of five 17thc Mughal ivory panels carved in relief with a design of poppies - probably originally from a box - went to a private collector in Europe. Also to private collectors were sold the following: an elegant circular emerald inset florets; another with an addition of four brands of rubies; an 18thc Mughal jade opium cup set with emeralds and rubies; a rare child's armoured jacket in iron, brass and copper of the 19thc from Lahore and a beautiful miniature painting c 1650 from Mughal India of Shah Shuja. This album page is from the Late Shah Jahan Album dispersed in Paris in the early 20thc. Shah Shuja was the second son of Shah Jahan and particularly beloved of his grandfather Jahangir. It is signed by the painter Unbar and the border is particularly fine with birds flying across the top, two gazelles in headed combat below and three standing courtiers in attendance down the left side.



study, collection and conservation of the arts. Museum professionals are active in international seminars on Islamic art, participate in the activities on the International Council of Museums (ICOM) and other worldwide international cultural countries.

continued from page 64

Coverage of Islamic Arts in Reference Works

at fellow experts than they are at novices from other fields.

Although the *Encyclopaedia* is current in other fields, recent research on Islamic architecture and art has not filtered down, and the *Encyclopaedia* is distinctly outdated. The article on *Architecture*, for example, is by K A C Creswell, a great but old-fashioned scholar, and the article *Kitab* ('Book'), hardly cites a single example of a book as a physical object comprised of paper, calligraphy, illumination, illustration, and binding, the way many scholars are now beginning to look at manuscripts produced in the Islamic lands. Although we are promised articles on *sura* and *tasawir*, respectively "representation" and "painting", it is logical to assume that these will focus on that historical chestnut, the role of imagery in Islam, rather than the development of particular styles of painting.

Archaeological information is woefully inadequate, leading some scholars to propose new encyclopaedias of Middle Eastern or Islamic archaeology. The article on Makkah ignores the architectural history of the Masjid al-Haram - surely the most important complex in the Islamic lands – in pre-modern times, although it does include a long section on the orientation of Islamic religious architecture towards the city! The presentation of many sites consists mainly of the reports of medieval geographers and 19th-century travellers, usually omitting any reference to excavations or standing remains. For example, the article on Balasaghun, the name by which the Qarakhanid capital was known, neglects to mention that Soviet and Russian scholars have identified it with Burana, site of an important minaret and several Qarakhanid tombs, and excavated there since 1927! From the article *Marw al-Shahidjan*, the reader would never know that the site contains one of the most significant buildings in all Islamic architecture, namely the tomb of Sultan Sanjar. This bias reflects the interest and training of many contributors, who are more familiar with excavating a text than a site.

The Encyclopaedia is also difficult to use, particularly for those who don't know Arabic or its bizarre system of transliteration. Subjects are usually, but not always, presented under the Arabic term for the subject in question, which makes it difficult for non-initiates to enter the temple of knowledge. The discussion of mosques, for example, is found under the rubric Masjid. Until recently the only way to figure all this out, if one didn't know Arabic (and even if one did!), was to stumble on one of the few cross-references from the equivalent English word. This situation has been ameliorated by several recent indexes of proper names and subjects, which should be used by all interested in consulting the Encyclopaedia. These indexes reveal how uneven is the coverage of Islamic art and architecture. Castles, as sites of important military and political events, often have articles devoted to them, while only a few mosques, such as al-Azhar in Cairo or the Karawiyyin in Fez, do, and these articles deal largely with institutional rather than architectural history.

Islamic art and architecture plays a larger and more central role in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, probably because there is an art-historian – Priscilla Soucek – on its editorial board. Published since 1985, the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* has now completed its sixth volume (to the middle of the letter D). The *Encyclopaedia Iranica* includes many biographies of artists, including painters, calligraphers, potters, metalworkers, and woodcarvers, as well as entries on sites and media, such as ceramics, carpets, and calligraphy, and – contrary to its name - subjects treated can extend from the Bosphorus to the Indus and beyond. Despite its comprehensive coverage of the arts of greater Iran, the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* has idiosyncrasies that make it difficult, if not impossible, for non-specialists to use. The most notable is the unique transcription system and the bizarre order and titles of articles. An article can appear either under the English or Persian name, apparently depending on which comes first in the Latin alphabet, thereby allowing a late article to be slotted in under the second place name. This arrangement means that the reader must know the subject-heading in English and Persian, and unlike *EI2*, no index of any kind has yet been prepared to help the untutored. Thus, even an expert might miss the coverage of the shrine of Imam Reza (*EI2*: Rida) at Mashad (*EI2*:Mashhad; *Times World Atlas*: Meshed) under the rubric *Astan-e Qods-e Razavi* ("The blessed threshold of Riza") or the very useful list of manuscript catalogues published by the Chester Beatty Library in Dublin under the letter 'C' for CHESTER BEATTY! Without knowing that they were there, why would any scholar look up an article on *Ardabil Carpets* or *Chinese-Iranians Relations*, let alone sections on "Mutual Influence of Chinese and Persian Ceramics" and "Mutual Influences in Painting?" Whereas the problem with the treatment of Islamic art in EI/2 has to do with coverage, that in the *Encyclopaedia Iranica* has to do with access.

I am particularly aware of the editorial inconsistencies in these two splendid publications because for the last seven years Sheila Blair and I have been the area editors for Islam and western Central Asian for yet a third project, *The Dictionary of Art*. The *Dictionary* has been in progress since 1984 and will be published in early 1996. Included in its 34 1000-page volumes will be 41,000 articles by 6,700 authors from 120 countries. The articles will be enhanced with 15,000 images and 300,000 bibliographic citations. Many of you are probably contributors to the *Dictionary*, the most ambitious art-historical publishing project of the 20th century, although probably few of you understand how your contributions will be slotted in the *Dictionary* as a whole. For this reason, I hope you will allow me to go into some detail about what you should expect to find in what Robert Hillenbrand has called "the greatest single accomplishment in the field of Islamic art-historical scholarship in the whole of the history of the subject."

Coverage of Islamic art in the *Dictionary* is generous, being given the same space as Ancient Greek or Japanese art, a far better situation –I might add - than we find in most universities or museums! The scale is all the more impressive when it is understood in context: in order to avoid overlap, the mammoth rubric *Islamic Art* covers only the development of the arts of Islam from its origins in the 7th century to the 19th century. Separate country articles treat the arts after the emergence of distinct national identities in the 19th century, as in Turkey, Algeria or Iran. Similarly, for reasons of space, it was decided that detailed discussion of Islamic art in Central Asia, India, Sub-Saharan Africa and south-east Asia would be covered in articles on these individual regions and the appropriate countries. While the

placement of articles can reveal a range of preconception and biases that may tell more about the writer than the subject, articles had to be placed somewhere. All articles will, however, be linked by an extensive network of summaries and cross-references, as well as by the 2-volume index.

The article on Islamic art alone is 400,000 words long (one third longer than the two *Pelican* volumes on Islamic art combined). It is preceded by an article 'Islam', introducing religion, religious practices, and religious patronage as they pertain to the arts. The article 'Islamic Art', which is subdivided into nearly 300 specialised articles, begins with an introductory section overviewing Islamic history and exploring such general issues as the nature of Islamic art, Islamic attitudes towards the arts, and patronage. Individual media are then discussed with separate subsections on architecture, arts of the book, metalwork, ceramics, textiles, and woodwork, as well as on arms and armour, coins, jewellery, glass and crystal. The subsections on individual media are divided into chronological and geographical blocks, representing major historical eras, such as the Abbasid caliphate or the Ottoman empire. Wherever possible the chronological and regional blocks have been kept uniform across media, so that the reader can not to follow the history of Islamic ceramics from its origin to the 19th century, but also trace the arts of the Safavid period in Iran from architecture to lacquer-painting.

Eleven separate subsections, for example, are devoted to the history of Islamic wood-work, the first comprehensive treatment of the subject anywhere. The subject of textiles and dress, which is usually relegated to a peripheral position in surveys of Islamic art, is treated in some thirty subsections on fabrics, carpets and dress, and there are separate entries on such topics as Kilim and Tiraz. Some of the most novel articles to be found discuss fakes and forgeries , historiography, collectors and collections, exhibitions and museums. This discussion of Islamic art will be enhanced by several hundred illustrations, and each major subsection is accompanied by an extensive and up-to-date bibliography for further reading.

In addition to this mammoth article, there are several hundred articles on individual aspects of Islamic art scattered throughout the 32 text volumes. They are of varying length, ranging from extended articles on important Islamic sites such as Cairo and Isfahan to brief definitions of terms, such as "arabesque" or "saz". The articles on Cairo or Istanbul, for example, comprise sections on history, urban development, art life and organisations, and brief descriptions and bibliographies of a dozen key monuments. Other articles cover artists, dynasties, patrons, styles, art forms, and scholars. For example, Bihzad and Sinan have lengthy biographies while Yaqut al-Musta'simi and Hafiz Osman have short ones. Articles on dynasties summarise the history of the dynasty and characterise patronage and artistic style; to them are appended biographies of individual members who were prominent patrons of the arts, such as the Timurid sultan Husayn Bayqara, patron of Bihzad and 'Alishir Nava'i. The *Dictionary* also includes articles on styles, such as the Bevelled style, and art forms, such as the arabesque or the *muqarnas*. Articles on scholars and historians of Islamic art as well as on major collectors show how the often-private splendours of Islamic art were first made available to a wide audience.

Information from Islamic art is also incorporated into global articles throughout the *Dictionary* on such topics as colour, ornament and pattern, printing, and tortoiseshell, to choose a few at random. The Dictionary's extensive discussion of the arts of the Islamic lands in modern times is most unusual and welcome. There are biographies of individual artists and architects as well as articles on countries and artistic movements. Considerable importance is given to architecture in the modern Islamic world, with biographies of major figures. Coverage of the pre-Islamic and Islamic arts of western Central Asia – the former Soviet republics – is also extraordinary, for I believe that no other source – whatever the language – presents such a coherent and detailed survey of the arts of this region.

This broad coverage has been made possible by the combined expertise of well over 100 contributors in twenty countries in Europe, America, the Middle East and Central Asia. Although the authors represent many different points of view and approaches to the study of Islamic art, they have been encouraged to present a comprehensive and balanced treatments of their subject. Many articles have been written by specialists who have just completed extensive research on the subject and include recent findings and material that is not readily available elsewhere. In contrast to the two *Encyclopaedias*, which appear in fascicles several times a year, the *Dictionary* will appear at one time. This publication schedule has meant that it is easier to standardise coverage and ensure that all articles of a given class - be it dynasties, sites or biographies of artists - contain comparable information, but it has also meant that there is a substantial lag between the time an article was written and its publication. I am sure that many of you have been infuriated by the apparent lack of progress, but let me assure you that your wait will be justified. Oleg Grabar has written that the *Dictionary of Art* "contains the most complete survey of the arts created by and for Muslims over 14 centuries from the Atlantic Ocean to the Philippines."

While working on the *Dictionary of Art* and on such other projects as our recent *Pelican* volume, I have been extraordinarily fortunate to have had ready access to the *Encyclopaedia of Islam*, the *Encyclopaedia Iranica*, and to the nascent *Dictionary*. Ideally these multi-volume reference works should sit beside one's desk, to be consulted on a daily, if not hourly basis. Nevertheless this is rarely possible, primarily because these multivolume books are extraordinarily expensive, not only for the institutional buyer but also for the individual scholar. Even with deep discounts and book credits for contributing articles, few individuals can now afford to subscribe to the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* or have the six or eight thousand dollars to buy a set of the *Dictionary of Art*. Thus, these encyclopaedia are found only in library reference rooms where they are consulted on an occasional basis, at best. It is possible that the proliferation of new technologies, such as CD-ROM or internet publication will make the information in these works available to the privacy of one's desk.

This raises one last point, which was mentioned by Anne Sutherland Harris at a reception for contributors to the *Dictionary of Art* at the CAA meetings in New York in 1994. It boils down to intellectual snobbery. Harris said that we all need to use reference works, but most of us are embarrassed to be seen by our colleagues doing so. Somehow or other, we have developed the idea that it is better to read an author's monograph than his or her encyclopaedia articles where it is all summarised in plain English. I guess that we are all supposed to have been born knowing it all, and to be seen in a library consulting a reference work such as an encyclopaedia or a dictionary (unless it is in an exotic language like German or Turkish) suggests that we know somewhat less than we should.

Based on a paper read at the College Art Association meetings, San Antonio, Texas, January 26, 1995.

continued from page 24

Treasures from Kuwait at Fitzwilliam

characterised by a greenish tinged glaze. The decoration is overglaze painted in copper red lustre painted bowl from Iran, dated January 1218 follows a metal prototype in its shape with four flanges on its rim; its decoration of floral and bird motifs and inscriptions is a variation of Kashan artistry. From Kashan in Iran is an unusual bowl with three feet and straight sides, which however characterises the finest lustrewares which were made in the 12th and 13thc in Kashan, renowned for its exquisite vessels and tiles, epitomising the technical achievements of Muslim potters. Typical of the diverse figural compositions, is its idealised Seljuk prince, with his Turkish head-dress and hierarchic halo. An unusually refined example of overglaze-painted Seljuk wares, known as Minai, is a late 12th-early 13thc creamy white bowl, its central rider framed by a turquoise band and a panel of six seated figures with a border of repetitive letters in Kufic, and a Persian inscription in Naskhi around its exterior walls. Two ceramic jars of the 12th-13thc are from Iran and Egypt. The strong design of black on turquoise of the Iranian jar was achieved by carving out the design from the black engobe which covered the underlying hard white paste. A transparent turquoise glaze was then applied which tinted only the sunken white areas. Though monochrome glazed wares were popularly produced in the Islamic world during the 12th and 13thc, Egyptian examples are rare. The white body of this exceptional Egyptian jar is decorated with incised and carved designs and covered with a transparent green glaze which does not run down to the splayed foot.

Two molded glass bottles are from Iran. Molds, usually of two or more parts, were made of wood or clay and used for relief designs in western Asia since the 1stc BC, later in pre-Islamic Iran and finally reaching a high level of perfection during the Seljuk period. The trailed purple thread applied to the flaring neck of the tiny bottle adds colour and a contrast to the clear glass with its relief decoration. The larger bottle, of a shape produced in Iran between the 9th and 12thc which also appeared in metalwork, is of transparent blue glass and combines the two techniques with a free blown neck and the body blown in a two-part mold. From Egypt is an 11th -12thc colourless transparent free-blown glass jug decorated with stamped Arabic inscriptions. The free-blown technique, attributed to Syrian glass-makers, was the most important innovation in the glass industry, resulting in a quantity of glass vessels throughout the Roman Empire. Less time consuming than the earlier mold blowing, a cheaper and greater variety of glass objects were made more accessible.

An 11c carved wooden panel from Egypt epitomises the high level of artistic expression achieved under the Fatimids. Thought to come from a Fatimid palace and possibly painted - for there are traces of gesso - it is carved in relief, a departure from the earlier bevel cutting practised in Egypt. This lively and naturalistic presentation of prancing gazelles is characteristic of Fatimid art.

A splendid carved ivory hunting horn from a single piece of elephant tusk is attributed to Sicily, one of the principle ivory carving centres in the Mediterranean, (the raised areas have flat profiles in contrast to the rounded or three-dimensional surfaces of contemporary Spanish pieces). Interlacing roundels of scrolling branches with grapes and pinecones surround various animals and birds - an elephant is included at the base.

Metalwork of this period is diverse, splendid and of an unalloyed fascination. A high-tin bronze bowl from 11th-12thc Afghanistan hammered from a sheet of metal is decorated with engraved and punched designs in geometric patterns of lozenges, small circles and double circles with seven-dot rosettes characteristics of the repertoire of Afghanistan and E Iran. Known as high-tin or white bronze, due to the lighter colour resulting from the addition of tin the metallurgical composition is approximately 90 % copper and 10% tin. The Chinese, Romans and Sassanians all produced high-tin bronze wares. According to early Arabic sources, the material - called Asfithruy - was used as a substitute for gold and silver, becoming popular in the 11th and 12thc centuries. From the late 12thc and also from Afghanistan is a monumental inlaid brass candlestick. Eight-sided, it belongs to a small group of faceted examples, and was hammered from a sheet of brass, chased, and inlaid with silver and copper. Such inlaying rare on earlier pieces, became common in the 12th and 13thc, together with such decorative techniques as engraving, piercing and chasing. Executed in repousse, are seated lions and birds, while a central panel depicts pairs of animals in combat, symbolising imperial power. Arabic inscription in both Kufic and Naskhi repeat invocations and good wishes. Metal pen boxes, one of the most attractive and inventive of Islamic objects, were in use throughout the Islamic world. With compartments for pens, ink and sand, they were variously shaped, the most popular being rectangular with rounded corners, similar to the example of the first half of the 13thc from Syria or Turkey. Made from a sheet of brass, engraved and decorated with Arabic inscriptions and scrolls and geometric designs within roundels. The inscription are vividly human! - "Do not write with your hand except that which will delight you to see on Judgement Day"... and one ends with the phrase wishing the owner life "as long as a pigeon coos": a deliciously happy idea! A cast bronze mirror from early 13thc Turkey has a pierced central boss and is decorated with a pair of adorned sphinxes and a band of benedictory inscriptions in foliated Kufic. Circular cast bronze mirrors found in E Iran, Syria and Turkey suggest they were made throughout the Islamic world. The same type had been made as early as 1200BC in China and central Asia from where its use must have spread westwards. Such mirrors, with a central boss for suspension from a cord, seem to have been used for divination. A remarkable piece combining a fork and a spoon, (a rather "modern" idea attesting to the creativity and practicality of Muslim artists), is in inlaid silver from 12 thc Iran. Folding on hinges, it is cast in silver, engraved, and inlaid with niello. Kufic Arabic inscriptions, a bird and a winged lion form the decoration. A handsome pair of 11thc gold bracelets, possibly from Syria, (comparable bracelets of which are known), are made from a thin sheet of gold and their hollow interior filled with a hard yellow substance. Hinged at mid-point with a ball and socket joint, the decoration is in low relief of birds or Kufic inscriptions on the shanks, and on the wide triangular areas flanking the clasp, of granulation and twisted wires. A pair of enamelled gold earrings of the 12thc are from Spain or Morocco. Into both faces of each earring is set an enamelled piece in which the first part of the Quranic chapter Ikhlas is executed in cloisonné. Although this technique and frame link this unique pair of earrings to 11thc Fatimid pieces made in Egypt or Syria, the character of the Arabic inscriptions and analogies to local architectural forms, indicates provenance being from Spain or Morocco. In Spain, this technique and enamelling as well as granulation continued in the 14th and 15thc.

In the Post Classical Period (1250-1500), ushered in by the capture of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258, more

objects have survived and there is more evidence about patronage than in previous periods. While international Islamic society had been established, the Mongol conquest introduced new elements into the historical situation, particularly new contact with distant cultures and new standards of art and patronage, according to Sheila Blair's essay. More wealth saw a great many gilded and painted glass lamps and lustre tiles in the mosques, and as this wealth spread to include amirs, princely houses and Court officials, metal and ivory objects were commissioned, the most exquisite piece of metal work produced during the period, the so-called Baptistere de Saint Louis, probably by the Mamluk amir Salar. There was a proliferation of illustrated books, in Persian rather than Arabic, encompassing a wider field and with the addition of historical works. For almost half a century the Mongol rulers were non-Muslims and these, such as the "Universal History" of 1315, were to justify their rule. These metropolitan manuscripts were produced in court-sponsored ateliers such as Rashid al-Din's near Tabriz, while the most famous 15thc atelier was that of Timur's grandson, the prince Baysunghur in Herat. In Iran, the tradition of illustrated manuscripts later moved from court-ateliers to include commercial production.

The tradition of producing 30 volume Quran manuscripts, each with one Juz, was widely practised in Egypt, Iran and Syria during the 14thc and two 14thc folios from Egypt - written in Muhaqqaq, (a type of cursive script), and Thuluth, (another cursive type) illustrate this. Illustrating the sumptuous Quranic codices produced under the Ilkhanid rulers, converted to Islam in the late 13thc, is a double folio of Juz 16 from a 30 volume Quran attributed to 14thc Iran. The Ilkhanid decoration – similar to Mamluk volumes of Egypt and Syria – is of Thuluth on a floral scroll reserved on a blue ground in a wide central panel within narrower panels of gold floral scrolls with touches of blue. Among scientific manuscripts is the renowned "ingenious Mechanical Devices", commonly known as the "Automata", written in Arabic by al-Jazari. This illustration of "The Beaker Water Clock" from a Syrian volume, dated December 1315 and transcribed in Naskhi, is one of the earliest Mamluk copies. The Manuscript of 149 folios containing 28 paintings and numerous drawings, is in the al-Sabah collection, except for several illustrations. A most attractive folio page illustration is from a dispersed 14thc Iranian copy of a treatise on zoology written in 941 in Baghdad by the private physician of the Caliph al-Mutaqqi and translated into Persian in 1291 at the request of the Ilkhanid ruler Ghazan. A naturalistic pair of onagers leap happily amid oversize lotus blossoms in a landscape of sparse folio - two decorative themes reflecting central or east Asia, which frequently appear in Islamic painting after the mid 13thc Mongol invasion. From 14thc Iran is an illustrated folio belonging to a group known as the "Small" Shahnames due to the size of their paintings incorporated into a page of text. The Shahnama, epic history of Iran and Turan, (N of the River Oxus), recounts the heroic deeds of kings and heroes from the beginning of history to the end of the Sassanian dynasty, combining fact with fiction. Copies of the Shahnama, written around 1010 in Persian by the epic poet Firdausi were among the earliest Ilkhanid manuscripts. The gold background, vivid colours, expressive figures and carefully painted details of the illustration on this folio are characteristic. A folio illustration of "Sultan Sanjar and the Old Woman" – as he dispenses justice, the primary duty of the sultan – is from the Khamsa (Quintet) of Nizami, a renowned lyrical and mystical work composed in the 12thc. Popularly copied and illustrated after the 14thc, this folio is from a volume of 350 folios and 16 paintings transcribed in Iran in 1487/88. Stylistic features point to its production in Shiraz, a major artistic centre under the Aq Qoyunlu ("white Sheep"), Turkmen who ruled E Turkey and W Iran during the 14th and 15thc.

Kashan, famed for its lustre-painted tiles during the Seljuk period, continued after the Mongol invasion, producing star and cross-shaped tiles to decorate the newly-built Ilkhanid mosques and shrines. A beautiful group of three late 13th-early 14thc star-shaped tiles, typical of the period's technique and decoration, is painted underglaze blue and turquoise with overglaze lustre, their centres in floral or geometric designs while Quranic passages encircle the borders. A single star-shaped tile from 14thc Iran – probably for a secular building – depicts a seated male figure in Mongol head-dress and garment, under a lobed arch on slender columns and between flowering branches. The outlines of lettering, the garment and spandrels are painted in lustre. Unique to the Mamluks, the epigraphic blazon was initiated by the reigning Sultan around 1320 and became the emblem of all subsequent rulers. Their Officers were also identified and blazons were displayed on garments, arms and armour, and on the art and architecture commissioned. From 15thc Egypt is a circular tile of approximately 11 inches with the epigraphic blazon of the Mamluk Sultan Qaitbay. The Arabic inscription - reserved in white against a blue ground and bordered in black – is read in sequence from the wide central panel, the upper and then lower panels.

A 14thc ceramic jar from Syria is from the largest group of pottery produced during the Mamluk period - blue and black underglaze painted wares - the most common shapes being bowls, jars and jugs. Jars usually contained spices and oils and were used by apothecaries to store herbs and medicines, their concave sides facilitating handling on crowded shelves. The decoration on this jar is of 4 large geese painted in reserve against a loosely drawn background. Also from 14thc Syria is a lustre painted ceramic jar of concave sides and sloping shoulders - these are known as "albarelli" and were used mostly for transporting oils or dry goods from the Islamic world to Europe. Lustre painting, especially in Raqqa, flourished in Syria during the Seljuk and Ayyubid periods, and later in Damascus under the Mamluks. Damascus lustrewares are generally in greenish gold tones on deep blue grounds, where Raqqa potters used copper reds with touches of blue or turquoise. The Ilkhanid period saw a new type of underglaze – painted ceramics known as "Sultanabad" wares after the W Iranian city. Usually characterised by dense compositions and sober colouring, true of the bowl shown which has a brownish-grey engobe over its white body and its decoration is underglaze painted with a thick white slip that stands in relief. A figure in Mongol hat and dress is centrally placed on a thickly foliated ground, surrounded by a pearl-banded rim; radiating petals are around the exterior. Also from 14thc Iran is a bowl of another type of Sultanabad ware. Of thinner walls and a finer paste than the previous bowl, its white engobe is partially exposed to contrast with the underglaze-painted blue, black and turquoise pigments. From the centre, radiating strips of blue and turquoise separate 12 panels filled with repeating designs of dots or interlacing motifs. On the exterior chain-like vertical lines of dots separate a series of petals. Roughly potted red bodies covered with coloured slips and incised designs are typical of the Mamluk ceramics produced in Egypt. Mostly of large bowls, this type of ware was in the kitchens of the upper classes, many displaying characteristic Mamluk blazons.

A 14thc low-footed bowl from

Egypt is covered with a yellowish slip and incised with a four-petalled central underglaze painted blazon, while an Arabic inscription reads "Made by the order of the sheikh, the reverent, the respected, the masterful, the most generous."

From Egypt or Syria is a 13thc free-blown purple glass perfume sprinkler with a flattened oval body, thin tapering neck and two trailed handles. The delicate neck and narrow mouth control the flow of perfume when sprinkled. The decoration is of applied opaque white threads combed and marvered - rolled on a flat surface to smooth out the vessel wall - a technique known to Egyptian glassmakers since the 2nd millennium BC and continued by the Syrians during the Roman period. Regaining popularity in the Islamic age, it came into common use between the 11th and 13thc especially in Egypt and Syria. Another small 13thc Syrian perfume sprinkler is of enamelled and gilded glass, a technique in which Syrian glassmakers excelled producing mosque lamps, vases and bottles. Floral scrolls are on the shoulders and sides of this small bottle and two medallions are on either side of the body. Figural representations appeared on Syrian glassware during the Ayyubid period and continued under the Mamluks, but were gradually replaced by bold inscriptions and floral designs to become characteristic of the 14thc. A rare type of enamelled and gilded Mamluk vessel is a free-blown, Egyptian or Syrian glass case of the early 14thc. The trailed handles were attached after the piece was blown and the lip and foot turned under. Divided into horizontal panels, an inscription in Arabic on the widest reads "Glory to our lord the sultan, the learned king", on a background of flowering scrolls. A phoenix, an auspicious creature of central and east Asian origin, flies across a neck panel and three-petalled blossoms within ovals join a floral scroll on the upper neck; they are a characteristic motif of the period.

A fine large inlaid brass bowl of the early 14thc from Iran and one of a group of 14thc bowls from Fars in the SW, is from a sheet of metal, engraved and inlaid with silver and gold. Divided on its exterior into horizontal panels, the widest contains 6 oval cartouches enclosing valedictory Arabic inscriptions to the sultan, with 6 alternating medallions, each bearing a rider with a hawk, arrow or lance. A narrow panel under the rim has 3 units off animals chasing each other, alternating with 3 inscriptions. The interior of the bowl is a fantastic marine world of fish, eels and other sea creatures revolving around a 12 pointed star. A splendid inlaid brass basin from Egypt or Syria of the first half of the 14thc, is representative of the shape and bold epigraphic style of Mamluk metal work. From a sheet of brass, engraved and inlaid in silver, the bowl has an Arabic inscription in Thuluth interspersed by 6 medallions enclosing flying ducks, around its exterior, and a similar text inside the rim. A third, placed inside the base, repeats some of the same phrases but in a circular formation, while incised at the bottom – in casual Naskhi – is the statement "Made for my master Abd Allah ibn Ahman", who is unidentified, but an officer of Sultan al-Malik al-Nasir according to the text within the rim. (As several 14thc Mamluk sultans used the honorific title of al-Malik al-Nasir, identification is difficult.) Also, as a number of inlaid brasses bear this same formulaic inscription it is thought these pieces were not commissioned but mass-produced for the court. A small, lidded, cylindrical inlaid brass box of the same period and provenance, is decorated with bold Thuluth inscriptions interspersed with floral scrolls radiating from a central rosette on the lid and encircling the body repeating typical Mamluk benedictions. A steel helmet from 15thc Turkey is engraved and overlaid with silver. Known as "turban" helmets from their bulbous shape, they were worn by the Aq Qoyunlu Turken. On the body of the helmet, faceted fluting created a honeycomb pattern which was filled with floral cartouches and wavy lines. Two large Arabic inscriptions encircle the top and edge of the helmet, the top reading "Ordered for the arsenal of al-Malik al-Mansur al-Sultan al-Ashraf" – the original owner may have been an Ashraf, one of the last princes of the Aq Qoyunlu clan. (The helmet bears the mark of the Ottoman arsenal) A tiny filigree gold rosette – roughly 1 1/2 inches – from 14thc Egypt or Syria, is fabricated entirely of open-work filigree, and constructed of round, flat and twisted gold wires which form spiralling foliated patterns on both faces. On one side, the centre is an eight-petalled rosette in a roundel, on the other is a four-partite interlacing design, both formed by flat wires.. 15th and 16thc manuscript illustrations show belts composed of 6-lobed rosettes, and 2 pairs of wire reinforced openings along the edges of this piece suggest its use strung on a belt.

A 14thc carved ivory box from Spain illustrates the long tradition of ivory carving which continued to produce a great many boxes under the Nasrids. Made mostly in the Islamic capital of Granada, Nasrid ivories such as this, recall those from Mamluk lands with similar geometric patterns and inscriptions. A carved, wooden box from Iran circa 1344, has bronze hinges and is grooved, mitred, dove-tailed and painted green. Its interior is divided into 4 rectangular compartments placed around a central square in which Quran manuscripts and writing equipment were kept. Naskhi calligraphy is the sole decoration and around the central medallion on the lid is the name of the donor, (Izz al-Din Malik) to the tomb of Fakhr al-Din and the date of the latter's death (November 1344) as well as the name of the maker of the box, al-Hasan ibn Qutublak, grandson of Fakhr al-Din - none of whom have been identified. Quranic verses surround the sides of the box.

Walter Denny's essay on late Islam (1500-1800) culminates in the extolling of Islamic art for its continuing enjoyment in the creation of works of art throughout all levels of society - so enabling it to meet new challenges.

The 3 great empires established in the 16thc in western Asia and India - Ottoman, Safavid and Mughal - brought together artists and artisans from the many diverse peoples under each, and with the great wealth acquired, produced under several outstanding patrons incomparable works of art while creating three distinctive new imperial styles. "What is relegated to the subsidiary realm of " decorative arts" in the European imagination and academic curriculum is a major focus of artistic energy in the Islamic world"... "the notion of beauty inherent in abstraction energy, mathematical order, visual and physical texture and colour"... and symbolism were central to Islamic art, only of late emerging in the west.

A superb mastery of technique is shown in two examples of stamped and gilded leather bookbinding of the mid 16thc from Iran and Turkey. On the traditionally shaped "envelope" binding, the central medallion, axial pendants, corner quadrants and entire field of the exterior are covered with a profusion of gilded floral scrolls. The upper half of the field was stamped with a large mold, reversed and repeated on the lower half to create a symmetrical composition. Also gilded are the wide borders inscribed with Quranic verses. The doublures - or inner faces of the covers - are decorated with central medallions and corner quadrants rendered in filigree paper. In the Safavid period stamping with large molds replaced tooling and gilding by hand. Filigree bindings reached an epitome of technical and aesthetic perfection in the 15thc under the Mamluks and Timurids. Patterns were originally cut out of leather, but in later

Safavid examples, paper was used, being less expensive and easier to handle. As in all Ottoman art, the Turkish example is less lyrical than the Persian, and though opulent more monumental. The flat brown leather field is devoid of embellishment except for the gilded central medallion, corner quadrants and border. In 16th and 17thc Ottoman style, these elements are larger than in the earlier, and the border wider. An element of colour is added with parts of the border design painted in deep red, matching the reddish brown leather of the interior and its gold stamped medallion and quadrants.

Nizami's Khamsa, (a poem symbolising the progress of the soul through seven stages combined with seven days, colours, planets, climates and regions, through the romance of Bahram Gur with the seven princesses he installed in separate pavilions), is illustrated here with 2 folios from a Persian copy, dated 1537, of 357 folios with 22 paintings. The king is shown visiting the princess of the Maghrib - or N Africa - in the turquoise pavilion on the Wednesday, and in another, he is with the princess of Iran in the white pavilion on the Friday. The style of painting is that of Shiraz, a renowned centre of book production in the 16thc. A painting depicting "a Sufi watching the poet Sadi in ecstasy "from Bukhara, Uzbekistan, is one of 2 from a copy transcribed in 1496/7 - probably in Herat - of the "Rosay of the Pious" by the Persian mystic poet Jami near the end of the 15thc at the Timurid court in Herat. An inscription indicating the painting was ordered for the library of a descendent of the Uzbek ruler Muhammad Khan, who had overthrown the Timurids in 507, gathering Herat's artists in his court at Bukhara, would indicate the manuscript as part of his booty, passing to his descendant Abd Allah Bahadur Khan, who ordered the 2 paintings. A Turkish miniature painting, dated 1595, is typical of the style of Ottoman artists in illustrating contemporary histories (Historical manuscripts were favoured by the Ottoman court). The "Journey of the Prophet" (a life of Muhammad and his followers) was written in 1388 by Darir of Erzerum. This folio is from the 4th of a 6 volume illustrated manuscript copy commissioned by the sultan Murad III and completed in 1595, most of which is now in the Chester Beatty Library, Dublin. The battle illustrated took place in 622/23 during which Miqdad and Utbah deserted the non-Muslims to join the Prophet's followers. Historical texts with portraits of the sultans were also popular. Several copies of one - the "Silsilename" (Book of genealogy) tracing the Ottomans from Adam and Eve - were made in the late 16th-early 7thc in Istanbul and also in Baghdad and Cairo. This folio - with medallion portraits of the first 3 descendants of Osman, founder of the Ottoman dynasty, Orhan, Murad I and Bayezid I - is attributed to Baghdad c 1600. A view of Venice - one of 131 illustrations from a copy dated 1688/89 of the immensely popular and much copied "Book of the Mariner", (a naval guide to the Mediterranean, written in 1525 by Piri Reis, a captain in the Ottoman admiralty, and dedicated to Sultan Suleyman the Magnificent), is immensely colourful and one of the most elaborate in the manuscript. Indian interest and pre-eminence in portraits, is shown by this "Portraits of a Painter, from the first quarter of the 17thc, which is a mirror-image of an Ottoman court painting of the 1480's, itself based upon a painting by a European artists, probably made during a contemporary visit.

A miniature painting of the late 16thc from India depicting the slaying of an elephant-headed creature is interesting in that it shows the various influences typical of Akbar's court where artists of diverse traditions were gathered at this time – the decorative landscape is Persian, the perspective of a distant city is copied from a European drawing, while the vitality and naturalism of the figures is an Indian quality. The energy and diagonal movement in a 17thc Indian album painting of a "lion Hunt" is the more effective for it being drawn against a pale tinted background. The Lion Hunt, frequently found in Islamic art – and in India particularly under Jahangir's patronage – was an immemorial royal preoccupation and the symbol of a monarch's courage and power.

With the advent of a vast importation of Chinese ceramics by the Ottoman court and the influx of some Persian potters, Turkish ceramics evolved in a superb array of tiles, plates and jugs. The shape and decorative division into 3 concentric zones of a plate painted in underglaze blue with touches of turquoise, shows the influence of Chinese blue and white porcelain. The clear and delicate design of spiral scrolls in its central medallion represents a type of Ottoman pottery with this design originating from manuscript illuminations and Tughras - or imperial monograms - of Suleyman the Magnificent, which was produced after the 1520's and seems to have been transmitted from the court studios later to the potters of Iznik. Also from the 2nd quarter of the 16thc is an Iznik plate in the typical range of colours - sage green, pale purple, greenish black, blue and turquoise - here, on a blue ground. Unique to Ottoman ceramics is the exquisite design of gracefully curving flowers and leaves (saz) "growing" from a base towards the surrounding rim. A ceramic bottle from Iznik, the most renowned Ottoman pottery centre, shows the addition of turquoise, and naturalistic themes, to the earlier blue and white palette. The overall design of white tulips growing from turquoise clustres of triple balls on a blue ground – these 2 motifs were especially popular in the 16thc and recur constantly. A flaring, rounded jug of the 2nd half of the 16thc, is particularly beautiful with its free and flowing design of large blossoms and buds and serrated (saz) leaves. The addition during the final development of Iznik ceramics of a bright and thick red – first employed in the tiles of Istanbul's Suleymanive Mosque, completed in 1557 – together with an emerald green, produced the most vivid and unforgettable ceramics. From 17thc Kerman and Mashhad, renowned centres in Iran, come a bowl and a plate, the former influenced by Ming China porcelains in both technique and decoration. Incised designs alternate with 4 lobed panels and a small square central landscape all underglaze painted in varying shades of blue. A plate with a low foot, curving walls and lobed rim typifies the fine wares produced during the 16th and 17thc in Kerman and Mashhad. The finely potted white body is underglaze painted in various intensities of blue, outlined in black, with floral designs reserved in white except for those on the rim. It also has certain influences from the Chinese. A revival of lustre painting occurred in Iran during the 2nd half of the 17thc and a beautifully shaped bottle, its white body coated with a dark blue slip and covered with a transparent glaze, is painted above this with a deep copper red lustre, its small elements derived from manuscript decoration.

From 18thc India is a small free-blown spherical glass bowl, its short neck and thick rim fashioned to secure the long tube used with a water pipe or Qalian. The transparent colourless glass is embellished with staggered rows of peacock feathers made of applied glass studs painted blue and gold and enclosed by wide, gold feathery bands. A gold scroll bearing blue and green blossoms, also in applied studs encircles the shoulder.

From late 16thc Iran is a cast brass candle stick with an overall pattern in horizontal rows of chased and engraved scrolls and linked catouches filled with leaves and flowers. The traditional shape of this candlestick was rarely

paintings show episodes from the history of the Islamic period. Alongside the direct and more or less conscious treatment of Islamic themes, there exist more complex forms of perception and representation of Muslim motifs, based on indirect, almost subliminal, associations, which, nonetheless, are interpreted clearly enough. They include contemplative perceptions of the world and expression in terms of parables which can be understood from several levels of perception - emotional,symbolical, associative, etc. A picture is often symmetrical, one portion reflecting another in a composition based on ornamental elements, a trait apparently deriving from traditional ideas of the mirror-like universe and its arabesque character.

A contemporary painter resorts to diverse methods to render the space on his painting sacred. One of these ways is to introduce text into the picture. These texts may be Quranic or words and letters of the Arabic language.

The paper by Natalia V Sazonova (Moscow, State Museum of Oriental Art), "Several Turkish Cloths from the Collection of the State Museum of Oriental Art: the Problem of Attribution", showed the complexity and importance of thorough museum work in tracing true events in Muslim countries' art history. Among the collection of cloths from the Middle East acquired by the museum in 1918, several valuable specimens of Iranian and Turkish cloths of the 16th and 17th centuries are of the greatest interest. It is only in recent years that these cloths have become an object of special study. The four specimens in question (NN 447 P, 451 P, 1696 P and 616 P) are fragments of silk cloths with floral ornament. Originally these articles were thought to be produced in Iran and were dated as 17th century. However, after a more detailed analysis as regards ornament, colour, style, composition and manufacturing technique, it became clear that several clues pointed to the cloth-manufacturing centres of Turkey.

Three of the specimens, made of silk, were designed in an open composition of vertical stripes typical of Turkey of the late 17th century. A fourth specimen, attributed to the 18th century, also from Turkey, was of linen ornamented with small shrubs crowned with rosettes.

Dr Dilara R Rustam-Zadeh (Moscow, State Institute for Art Students) spoke on "Music of the Countries of the Middle East: Its Topological Features". She said that the music of Turkey, Afghanistan and Pakistan preserves, to this day, the local traits of their

ISL RAS Institute of State and Law at the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

ITHIFA RAFA Institute of the Theory and History of Fine Arts at the Russian Academy of Fine Arts, Moscow

KBI Kazan Building Institute, Kazan

KISR Kazathian Institute of Strategic Researches (Aima-Ata)

KMU Kazan Medical University, Kazan

KRSU Kirghizian Russian-Slavic University (Bishkek)

KSU Kazan State University, Kazan

LIW League of the Islamic World, Jeddah

LUNN Linguistic University of Nijay Novgorod

MAE RAS Museum of Anthropology and Ethnology of RAS, St Petersburg

MAIAK Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs, Kuwait

MAIAM Ministry of Awqaf and Islamic Affairs of Morocco, Rabat

MERF Ministry of Economics of the Russian Federation, Moscow

METU Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey

MHIC Moscow High Islamic College (Spirit Board of Muslims of the Central Europe, Part of RF), Moscow

MFA RF Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Moscow

MRF CMCIS Ministry of the Russian Federation for the Cooperation with the States-Members of CIS, Moscow

MSCI Muslims Spiritual Centre of Ingoushetia Republic, Nazran

MSH Maison des Sciences de l'Homme - Etudes Tuques et Ottomanes, Paris, France

MSU Moscow State University, Moscow

MSHR MFAR Moscow State Inst of Internet. Relations at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia, Moscow

NUM National University of Malaysia (Kuala-Lumpur)

PAIG People's Arabic Islamic Congress, Khartoum, Sudan

PAF Pakistan American Foundation, Villanova, USA

QCS Qatar Charitable Society, Doha, Qatar

RAFA Russian Academy of Fine Arts, Moscow

RAICR Royal Academy of Islamic Civilisation Research, Amman, Jordan

RAS Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow

RBMCEP RF Religious Board of Moslems at the Central-European Part of Russian Federation, Moscow

RIINSP Russian Independent Institute of National and Social Problems, Moscow

RAICR Russian Independent Institute of Natural and Social Problems, Moscow

RSHU Russian State Humanitarian University, Moscow

RSUNF Russian State University of Nations' Friendship, Moscow

SCC SAB MR Supreme Coordinating Council of Administrative Spiritual Boards of Muslims at Russia, Moscow

SCIA Supreme Council for Islamic Affairs, Cairo, Egypt

SDRO MFA RF Sub-Department of the Religious Organisations at MFA RF, Moscow

SIAS State Institute of Fine Arts at the Russian Federation's Ministry of Culture, Moscow

SMMC State Museum of Musical Culture, Moscow

SM FAOP State Museum of the Fine Arts of Oriental Peoples, Moscow

SOAS School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, UK

SIPR IOS RAS St Petersburg Branch of the Institute of Oriental Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences, St Petersburg

SIPSU St Petersburg's State University, St Petersburg

STUO State Technical University of Omsk, Omsk, Siberia

SU Sorbon University (Paris - France)

SUNN State University of Nijay Novgorod

TATAR-INFORM Information Agency of the Republic of Tartarstan, Kazan

TSIOS Tashkent State Institute of Oriental Studies, Tashkent

TYN *Tatarstan Yashlare* (Newspaper, Kazan)

UA The University of Azhar, Cairo, Egypt

UHKIS The University of the Holy Koran and Islamic Studies, Khartoum, Sudan

UF University of Florida, USA

UIC University of Islamic Culture at IIC, Moscow

UKH University of Khartoum, Sudan

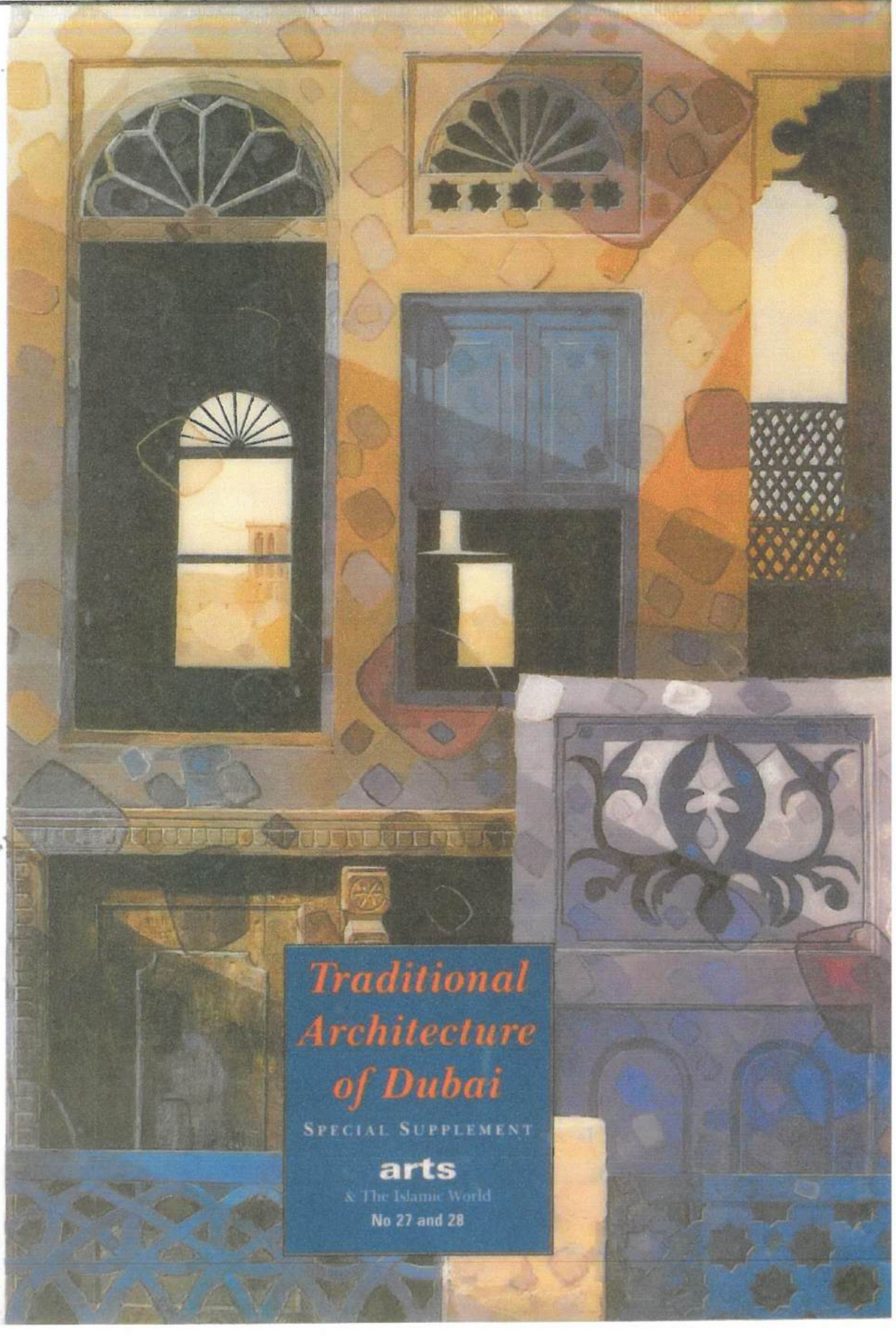
UL University of London, UK

UQ University of Qatar, Doha, Qatar

USU The Ufa State University, Bashkortostan, Ufa

UZAS Uzbekian Academy of Sciences, Uzbekistan

WSUP The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, USA



Traditional Architecture of Dubai

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

arts
& The Islamic World
No 27 and 28

Traditional Architecture of Dubai

SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT

arts
& The Islamic World
No 27 and 28

CONTENTS

Introduction
The Director General, Dubai Municipality

Historical Buildings Section

Architectural Heritage Conservation Committee

PROJECTS

1 Shaikh Saeed House

2 Al Faheidi Fort

3 Al Ahmadiya School

4 Heritage House

5 Al Wakeel House

6 Al Ghuraifa Majlis

7 Historical Hatta Village

8 Conservation of Grand Souq, Deira

9 Lootah Mosque

10 Traditional Building in Creek Park

11 Traditional Cafe in Mamzer Park

12 Conservation of Al Bastakia Area, Bur Dubai

13 Conservation of Al Ahmadiya Area, Deira

14 Conservation of Grand Souq, Bur Dubai

15 Conservation of Dubai Creek Elevations

SPONSORED BY DUBAI MUNICIPALITY

GUEST EDITOR: **MALIK AHMED OMER**

All information on, and photographs of the projects have been supplied by the Historical Buildings Section, Dubai Municipality.

COVER PAINTING BY ABDUL QADER AL RAIS, UAE

INTRODUCTION

The importance given by Dubai Municipality to the architectural and urban heritage of the Emirate of Dubai, is an expression of its conviction that this heritage must be conserved and protected, so that a faithful record is maintained of our history and culture, for posterity.

However, the challenges to conserve this heritage have been great, from the rapid urban development and modernisation that has taken place in the Emirate of Dubai in the past few decades. These challenges have further underlined the cultural significance of the historical buildings, and those pioneering efforts of the citizens of Dubai, in the past, in scientific and cultural fields.

Thus our efforts to record, document and identify the urban and architectural heritage were a natural extension of our concern for our citizens, to lead them towards a better understanding of their heritage, which would make them aware of their past, proud of their heritage, and worthy of their future.

The initiative taken by Dubai Municipality in the establishment of its Historical Buildings Section was the first step in the conservation of the heritage of the Emirate of Dubai. Its recommendations, based on scientific and cultural studies, will serve as guide-lines to be followed by the Municipal Departments concerned.

The following pages shed light on an important era in the glorious history of the Emirate of Dubai, and on those fruitful efforts that seek to conserve, restore and preserve our architectural and urban heritage.

Qassim Sultan
Director General
Dubai Municipality

Historical Buildings Section

Dubai Municipality has played a pioneering role among the municipalities in the UAE. Since the 1980s it has given great importance to the conservation of the architectural heritage of the city and its surrounding areas.

In view of the expertise needed for the restoration of the historical buildings, and laying down general policies for this task, the Archaeological Buildings Restoration Unit was established in 1991. This Unit started its activity with the restoration of Shaikh Saeed Al Maktoum House and, since then, has undertaken the restoration of Al Faheidi Fort, Al Ahmadiya School, Al Wakeel House, Al Ghuraifa Majlis, Al Nahar Tower, Shandagah, Baraha and Al Wakeel watch-towers, the Historical Hatta Village and many more.

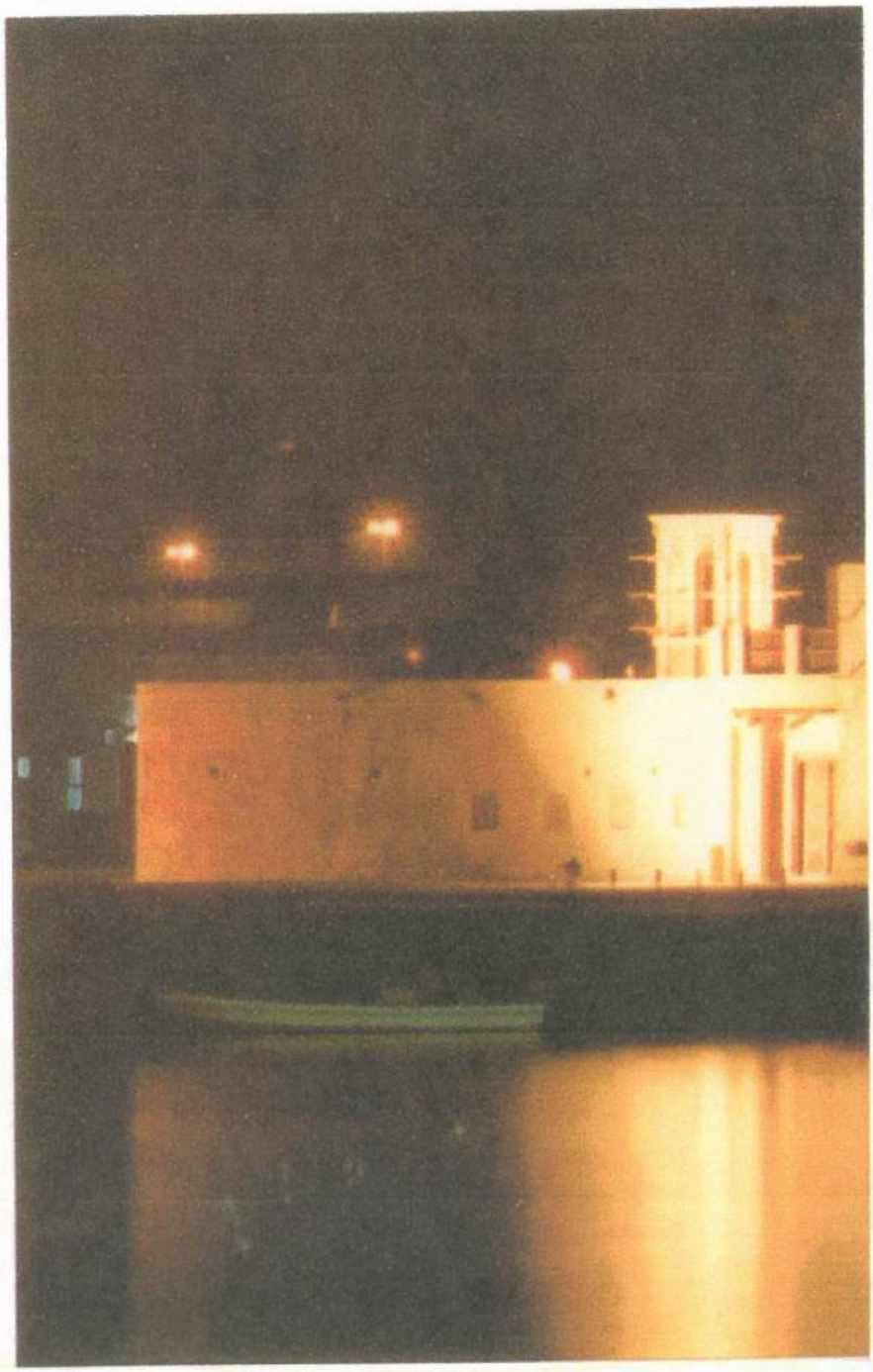
Within a short period this Unit developed into a sub section, the Historical Buildings and Exhibition Unit, to include the furnishing of historical buildings, which could be converted into museums and exhibition areas. In the year 1994, this sub-section was converted into Historical Buildings Section, keeping in mind the administrative framework appropriate to the function entrusted to it.

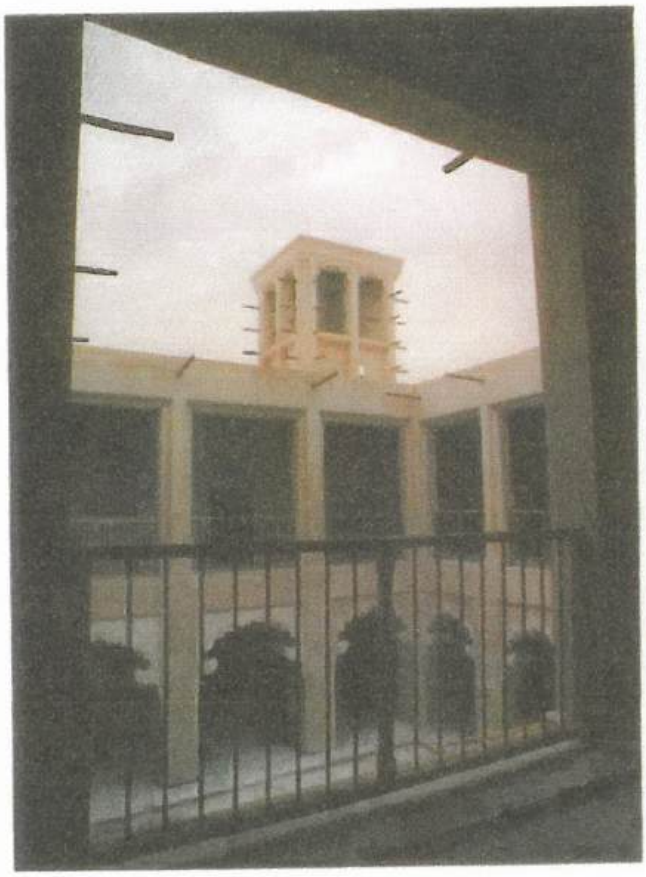
This Section has been provided with the engineering, technical personnel and necessary manpower. During 1991-1995, the Section developed 50 varied projects, and increased its manpower to 240 employees. The Historical Buildings Section now includes, two sub-sections. The Studies and Research Unit is responsible for carrying out the architectural and heritage studies and preparing the design of projects and the Restoration Unit is responsible for executing the restoration works at different sites. It has its own workshop and employs carpenters, welders, ornamental specialists, and a team of electricians with a qualified electrical engineer in charge. The Historical Building Section, at its main office, has specialised personnel for the planning of projects as also their internal designs so as to meet its objectives.

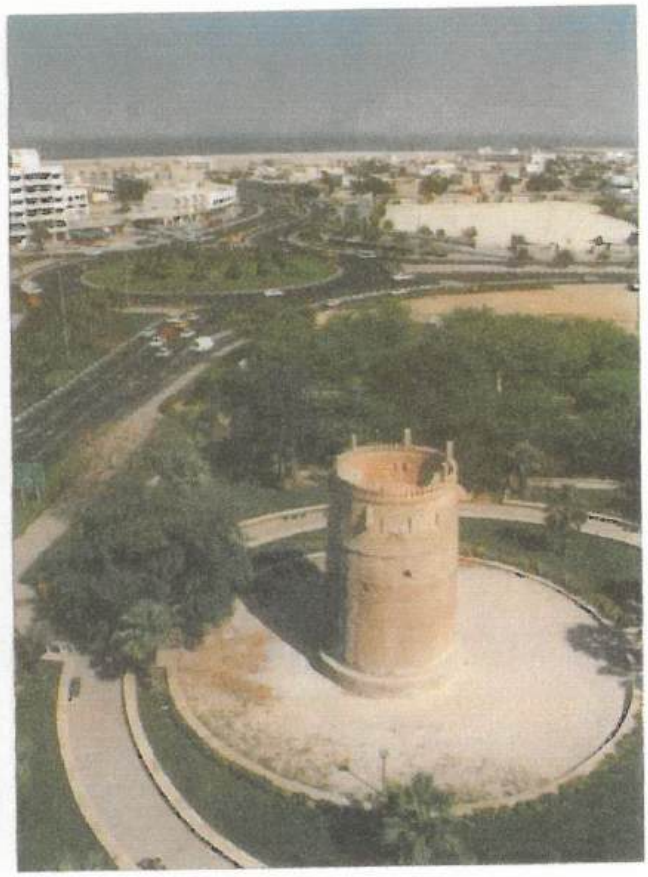
The Historical Buildings Section has prepared hundreds of drawings including details of the traditional features such as foundations, walls, roofs, wooden doors and windows, ancient locking devices and iron mongery, gypsum ornamental decorations and much more. These have assisted the workforce in executing the projects.

Some of the building techniques of the historical buildings are worthy of mention as they show the ingenuity of the builders of yester-years in utilising the locally available materials to the best advantage to achieve the desired results. These include the following:

Foundations and Walls: These were constructed with petrified coral stones, which are still available in







Above, left: Courtyard of Al Ahmadiya School. **Above, right:** Al Nahar Tower **Below:** Mason restoring a coral stone wall

plenty in the coastal areas, along with lime mortar. In the mountainous areas boulders and stones have replaced the coral.

Floor Slabs: The main supports spanning the walls were of 'chandal' wood, which were available in maximum lengths of 4 meters, which in turn restricted the width of rooms. These supports were placed 25 cm apart. These were covered with a matting of palm fronds over which a thick layer of screed consisting of gypsum, lime and crushed coral was placed. This was then given a smooth coat of 'sarooj', a mixture of burnt red earth, and water.

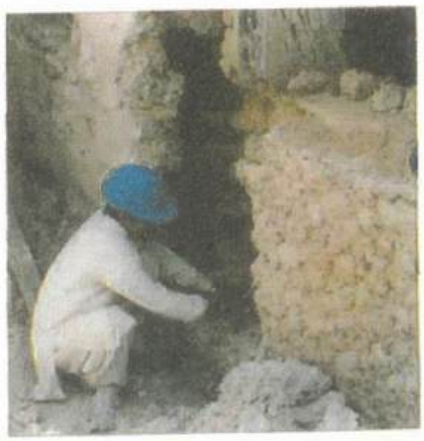
Beams: The beams ranged in widths of 41 to 44 cm and consisted of a bottom layer of 'chandal' wood laid side by side, in a single or double layer, followed on the top by a mixture of gypsum and crushed coral with a filling of coral and gypsum mortar, to integrate with the floor or roof slabs.

Doors and Windows: Teak wood was employed, either in battens or panels, to construct the doors and windows, the former having iron or brass studs. The windows were divided in two sections so that only the top half could be opened if desired. The windows had simple vertical iron rod grills for security. Traditional locking devices from the interior were utilised, with interlocking wooden sections.

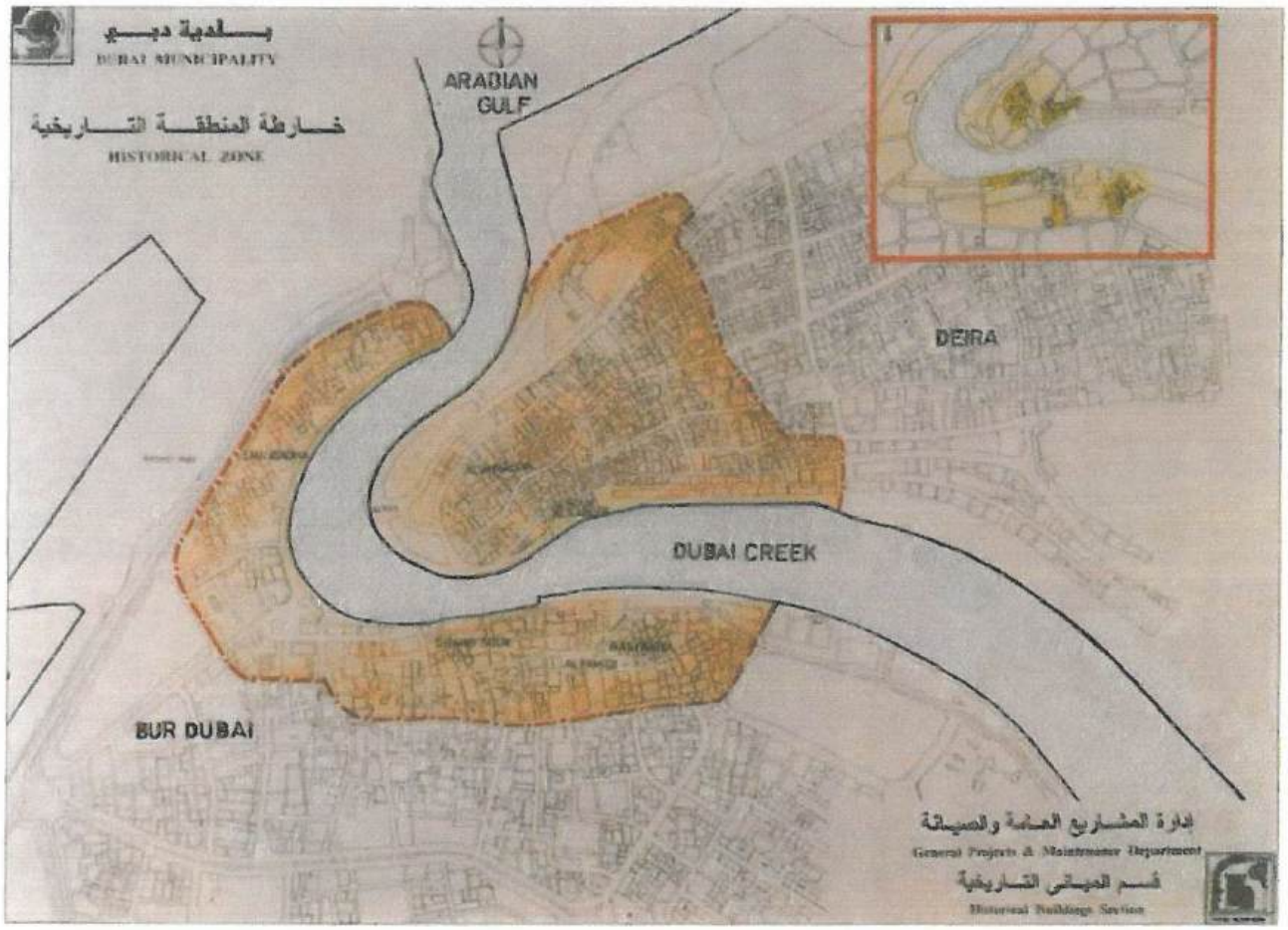
Gypsum Ornaments: The ornamental decorations comprised of pierced screens, arches, stucco decoration, bands and crenellations in a variety of designs incorporating floral or geometric patterns. The pierced screens served as ventilators where privacy was desired.

In all the restoration projects, the Historical Buildings Section first carried out a thorough survey of the structures to identify the defects and deterioration in the various building components before undertaking the execution. Building foundations and walls were restored using traditional materials, and cracks in the walls attended to. Many of the floor and roof slabs were replaced with new wooden members and the top layers. New doors and windows were provided in some cases. The gypsum decoration was restored or replaced with the utmost care to its detailing.

The restoration projects also included new electrical installations and lighting, and an air-conditioning system was provided where necessary. Toilet facilities were either upgraded or replaced with modern amenities. Some of the buildings have been converted into museums, and plans have been made for the others for suitable utilisation in the future.



Architectural Heritage Conservation Committee



Town Plan of Dubai showing Historical Zones

The Architectural Heritage Conservation Committee in the Dubai Municipality was formed in November 1994, and consists of the architects from the Historical Buildings Section, Planning and Survey Department, and Buildings and Government Housing Department.

During the execution of the restoration projects it was observed that many of the historical buildings were surrounded by others alien to the traditional heritage. It was therefore necessary to create an environment which was harmonious and appropriate to the historical buildings. Dubai Municipality, accordingly, allocated four areas in the centre of Dubai for conserving the traditional pattern particularly in respect of their elevations and finishing materials, so that these areas could form a nucleus of Gulf architecture, and be expanded in the future. This led to the formation of the Architectural Heritage Conservation Committee.

The object of this Committee is thus to conserve the historical areas and buildings, and create a local pattern derived from the traditional architecture, as also unity and harmony in the old part of the city. This has been achieved through recommendations concerning the conservation, planning (including widths of lanes [*Sikkas*] and heights of buildings), maintaining the traditional architectural styles, reviewing elevations of new buildings in the area, and also publishing a guide to the traditional elements of the architectural heritage for researchers, scholars, consultants and under-graduates.

The Committee holds weekly meetings. It considers building applications with regard to the heights permissible in the area, reviews the architectural drawings submitted, particularly the elevations of the buildings, suggests necessary amendments to make them compatible with traditional architecture, and also reviews the designs for the interiors of the shops in respect of the columns, capitals and arches, and the shop signs, so that they conform to the guide-lines laid down.

The Committee gave freedom to the Consultants in designing buildings in the areas, within the framework of the general guidelines. The Consultants, specially the non-nationals were enlightened by the Committee about the elements of traditional architecture, and urged to use these in their designs.

The general public, landlords, and Consultants have been made aware through meetings and discussions, of the significance of the conservation in order to preserve the cultural heritage. Dialogue is made in an objective manner whereby a landlord is convinced about this, and solutions reached which are satisfying to both parties.

The Committee also made several field-trips to the old areas of Bur Dubai and Deira to acquaint itself with the conditions of the buildings, and make case studies, to consider the problems, and arrive at the most suitable solutions, when it made its recommendations. The Committee also proposed the heights of buildings in these areas, which resulted in the permission to resume construction in the Grand Souqs of Bur Dubai and Deira.

The Committee's area of activity has now been expanded to cover the entire old area of the city instead of the previous four. Thus the experiment can be applied on a wide scale to attain a more comprehensive result.





Top: New building with approved elevation.
Above: The elevation of this building followed the guidelines.

The Historical Buildings Section has prepared a map of the city which marks 264 historical buildings in the old areas. It has been approved and sent to the Town Planning Department for circulation among all concerned departments to implement it, and not give any permits for demolition of buildings without consulting the Historical Buildings Section.

SHAIKH SAEED HOUSE

This imposing building distinguished by its four elegant wind-towers, stands along the famous Creek of Bur Dubai. It was built in 1896 and was the residence of the Ruler. It takes its name from Shaikh Saeed Al Maktoum, who resided there until his death in 1958.

Shaikh Saeed House is built around a large courtyard in the style of residences of the olden days, in phases, over a number of years. It is partly single, and partly two-storied, comprising a large number of rooms, verandas and bath rooms, divided into independent family units.

There are two entrances to the building. The main entrance is from the Creek side, through a security yard, from where is the entrance to the main





majlis and guest rooms. The yard leads also to the main courtyard, around which are distributed five separate family units, each of which consists of a veranda, majlis and rooms. The second entrance is on the rear side of the building, and was probably reserved for family members.

The wind-towers are essential features of Gulf architecture which ameliorate the discomforts of the hot summer months. These square masonry towers, or 'barjeels' are open on all sides and rise above the roof tops. They catch the breeze and funnel it into a room below where the increased air movement provides comfort to the occupants. The air vents of the wind-tower are open in summer and closed during the winter season. The builders of days gone by have shown ingenuity in the various designs of the wind-towers and their decoration.

Dubai Municipality appointed a specialised Consultant to carry out a thorough survey of the building and its deterioration, and then plan its restoration. The work was commenced in 1984, and completed two years later using traditional building materials and techniques, and where necessary, strengthening the structure with modern materials.



Top: Courtyard looking north. **Above, left**: Aerial view of Shaikh Saeed House. **Above**: Interior of majlis with seating arrangement

Infinite care was taken in the restoration of the architectural elements of the building. The restoration is remarkable for its carved teak wood doors and windows, architraves and wooden lattice screens, and the balustrades of railings. The pierced gypsum ventilating screens have floral and geometric designs, and are set into the thick walls.

The building is now illuminated in the night with flood-lights, and stands as a reminder of Dubai's rich architectural heritage and culture. The House is now converted into a Museum of Historical Photographs and Documents of the Emirate of Dubai, and will be opened for the public shortly.

SHAIKH SAEED HOUSE

This imposing building distinguished by its four elegant wind-towers, stands along the famous Creek of Bur Dubai. It was built in 1896 and was the residence of the Ruler. It takes its name from Shaikh Saeed Al Maktoum, who resided there until his death in 1958.

Shaikh Saeed House is built around a large courtyard in the style of residences of the olden days, in phases, over a number of years. It is partly single, and partly two-storied, comprising a large number of rooms, verandas and bath rooms, divided into independent family units.

There are two entrances to the building. The main entrance is from the Creek side, through a security yard, from where is the entrance to the main majlis and guest rooms. The yard leads also to the main courtyard, around which are distributed five separate family units, each of which consists of a veranda, majlis and rooms. The second entrance is on the rear side of the building, and was probably reserved for family members.







Top: Courtyard looking north. **Above, left**: Aerial view of Shaikh Saeed House. **Above**: Interior of majlis with seating arrangement

The wind-towers are essential features of Gulf architecture which ameliorate the discomforts of the hot summer months. These square masonry towers, or 'barjeels' are open on all sides and rise above the roof tops. They catch the breeze and funnel it into a room below where the increased air movement provides comfort to the occupants. The air vents of the wind-tower are open in summer and closed during the winter season. The builders of days gone by have shown ingenuity in the various designs of the wind-towers and their decoration.

Dubai Municipality appointed a specialised Consultant to carry out a thorough survey of the building and its deterioration, and then plan its restoration. The work was commenced in 1984, and completed two years later using traditional building materials and techniques, and where necessary, strengthening the structure with modern materials.

Infinite care was taken in the restoration of the architectural elements of the building. The restoration is remarkable for its carved teak wood doors and windows, architraves and wooden lattice screens, and the balustrades of railings. The pierced gypsum ventilating screens have floral and geometric designs, and are set into the thick walls.

The building is now illuminated in the night with flood-lights, and stands as a reminder of Dubai's rich architectural heritage and culture. The House is now converted into a Museum of Historical Photographs and Documents of the Emirate of Dubai, and will be opened for the public shortly.

AL AHMADIYA SCHOOL







Top: Bird's-eye view of Al Ahmadiya School
Above: Cusped arches of ground floor verandahs.
Right: Stucco panel with Arabic calligraphy above doors.

Established by the late Shaikh Ahmed bin Dalmouk, the Al Ahmadiya School, named after him, was built in 1912. It was the earliest regular school in the Emirate of Dubai where instructions were imparted by some of the leading teachers of the day, and many distinguished scholars and dignitaries received their education.

The School is located in the centre of the residential Al Rass area of Deira, which was a convenient location for the children of the elite, and traders, who resided there. However, with the building of new schools in the 1950s, the School was neglected. For some years the building was used by the Department of Islamic Affairs and Awkaf of the Government of Dubai. But this also moved out to a more spacious and modern building.

The School had been constructed in three phases. In the first phase eight class-rooms with a kitchen and a washroom were built around a central open courtyard, with verandas. This was followed in 1920 with a large room built along one side on the first floor and a staircase, to accommodate the teachers. A wind-tower also provided comfort to this room. Two years later the remaining area on the first floor was built over to accommodate the growing number of students.

The survey and design of the restoration work of the School was entrusted to a firm of Consultants. Because of the lack of contracting firms with experience in restoration works, Dubai Municipality established its Historical Buildings Restoration Unit which commenced with the restoration in 1993, utilising traditional techniques and materials.

The building is characterised by its teak wood doors and windows, and the gypsum decoration. Most of the doors to the class-rooms have gypsum stucco with Arabic calligraphy of verses from the Holy Qur'an. The ground floor veranda pillars have ornate scalloped arches with stucco designs in their spandrels and wide soffits. Two of the rooms along the boundary have semi-circular pierced screens in a variety of geometric and arabesque design. The gypsum decoration in the building formed the major portion of the restoration work and took a long time because of its intricate nature. The work is going on now to use the School as a Museum of Education.

HERITAGE HOUSE

Constructed in 1890 the building represents an explicit translation of traditional elements of domestic architecture of yester-years.

The Heritage House is located adjacent to the north boundary of Al Ahmadiya School, and once separated it from the Gulf beach front. Today, it overlooks the Al Ahmadiya Street along the north, with narrow lanes of residential buildings along its east and west.

The House consists of a large courtyard surrounded by rooms. The main entrance is from the Al Ahmadiya Street in the north. This leads to a large entrance hall from where one enters the main majlis or sitting room. The entrance hall is also connected through a narrow passage with a side entrance and the courtyard. After the majlis are two rooms with a deep veranda facing the courtyard.

There is an annex in the north-east corner comprising of an entrance hall and a large majlis. The former leads to a wind-tower and ladies' majlis. The service facilities are located along the west of the courtyard and comprise the kitchen, large store and servants' rooms etc. There is another entrance from the lane to this section.

The first floor is over the north structure and is reached by a staircase in one corner of the veranda facing the courtyard. It leads into a deep veranda on three sides of a long room which served as a summer majlis. The area over the entrance hall and ground floor majlis is left as an open terrace with a latticed wooden parapet.

Heritage House is characterised by its elegant gypsum bands of repeating motifs along the top of the external and internal walls. There are recessed niches mainly on top of the shuttered windows in the exterior. Another striking feature is the decorative crenellations on top of the walls abutting the lanes and the rear boundary.

The restoration work commenced in 1994 and took 18 months to complete at a cost of about Dhs. one million. The house is planned to be furnished with traditional furniture and open to public by the end of 1996.







Top: Heritage House in Deira. **Middle:** View of courtyard with summer majlis on first floor. **Right:** Wind-tower in north-east corner.

AL WAKEEL HOUSE

Al Wakeel House constructed in 1934, takes its name from the agent (wakeel) of the British India Steam Navigation Company, who used it as an office and residence. It is significant because it is the first administrative building in the Emirate of Dubai, designed specifically for the purpose. It also has a tower on the roof terrace to observe ships arriving in the Creek.

Al Wakeel House overlooks the Creek from Bur Dubai side, a convenient site to observe the navigation of ships. On its east, the rear side, the building overlooks the frontage of the Bur Dubai Grand Souq, and view of its western entrance. On the north and east are commercial buildings with a lane leading to the Creek along the west.

The building comprises two storeys. The ground floor includes an entrance veranda with a staircase on its right, a kitchen and other rooms, and a rear veranda overlooking the Creek. The first floor is similar in plan except that there is an open terrace over the ground floor entrance veranda, and a toilet room over the kitchen. This floor was used as a residence of the agent.

The Creek elevation, after restoration, has ornamental gypsum brackets on the veranda pillars and a wooden lattice railing. A low boundary wall along the Creek is topped with a low latticed wooden railing and steps which lead to the Creek. It may be mentioned that the entire roof was replaced with new traditional building materials. Dubai Municipality began the restoration of the building in 1994 and completed the work in 18 months. The building is going to be used as the Marine Museum of Dubai.







Top: Al Wakeel House frontage on the Creek.
Middle: First floor verandah overlooking the Creek.
Right: Corner of building with projecting floor beams.

AL GHURAIFA MAJLIS





Top: Al Ghuraifa Majlis summer retreat. **Above:** Interior of first floor majlis.

Built around 1955, the Al Ghuraifa Majlis was a summer retreat for the late Shaikh Rashid bin Saeed Al Maktoum, the Ruler of Dubai, where he spent his afternoons when the temperatures became moderate and the humidity was high. The Majlis is situated in the Umm Suqaim area which was once dotted with date palm groves, and fishermens' huts.

The Majlis, about 100 square meters in area, is on a large site of 3,300 sqm in the centre of a residential area. In the past, it was the only building constructed of stones and gypsum in the midst of a date farm.

Its ground floor has a large covered area divided by a row of pillars. Along the north of it is a large storeroom. The first floor is reached by an open staircase where one enters a long veranda. Behind this is the summer majlis. A wooden ladder leads to the roof from the veranda.

The entire structure is simple with shuttered wooden windows on the first floor, set into deep pillars overlooking the garden. The windows are in two sections, whereby the top and lower halves can be opened separately. The niches above the windows have perforations for ventilation.

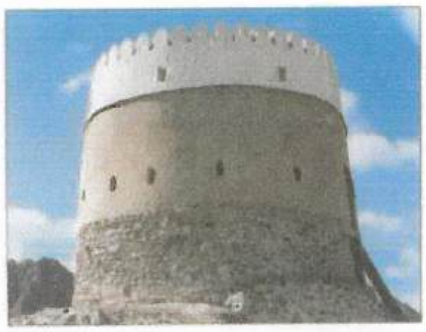
Dubai Municipality has planned the open land as a traditional park to serve the neighbouring residences. The landscaping includes a boundary wall with gypsum decorative panels. The layout includes a paved pathway, rows of date palms with a network of 'falaj', traditional water channels, a pool and a covered area of palm thatch with a wind-tower of rustic design, which has a cafe below. There is a guard room and toilets at the entrance gate. Dubai Municipality is executing the entire project through its own work force.

HISTORICAL HATTA VILLAGE

The construction of the Historical Hatta Village dates back to the 16th century, and represents an important phase in the history of Dubai. It features an interaction between the architecture of the mountainous areas and that of the plains and the desert. Perhaps the exchange of expertise between the village and Dubai city enriched the architectural conception of the latter.

The Village is situated in the centre of Hatta town overlooking the fertile valleys. Through its defensive watch-towers the view extends beyond to the paths in the mountains with their undulating terrains and dense palm groves below.

The Village is in a style similar to those of the Arabian peninsula where defence is the main criterion for its location. The ancient Hatta Fort dominates the Village providing a strategic view of the watch-towers located in the north and south. The Friday Mosque is to the north of the Fort, and the road leading to it follows the water channels, similar-





Above: Village Mosque. **Top:** A mountain-top watch-tower. **Below:** Aerial view of Hatta Historical Village

to the roads in the village.

There are about thirty houses in the village of varied sizes and modes of construction according to the means of the occupants. The application of building materials such as mountain stones and mud for the walls, and trunk of palm trees, reeds and mud for the roofs are different from those used in Dubai.

A specialised consultant was engaged by Dubai Municipality to carry out the survey of the village and its restoration. Construction materials were prepared under the supervision of the Municipal engineers with the assistance of the local inhabitants, and the buildings were restored with their roofs completely reconstructed in most cases.

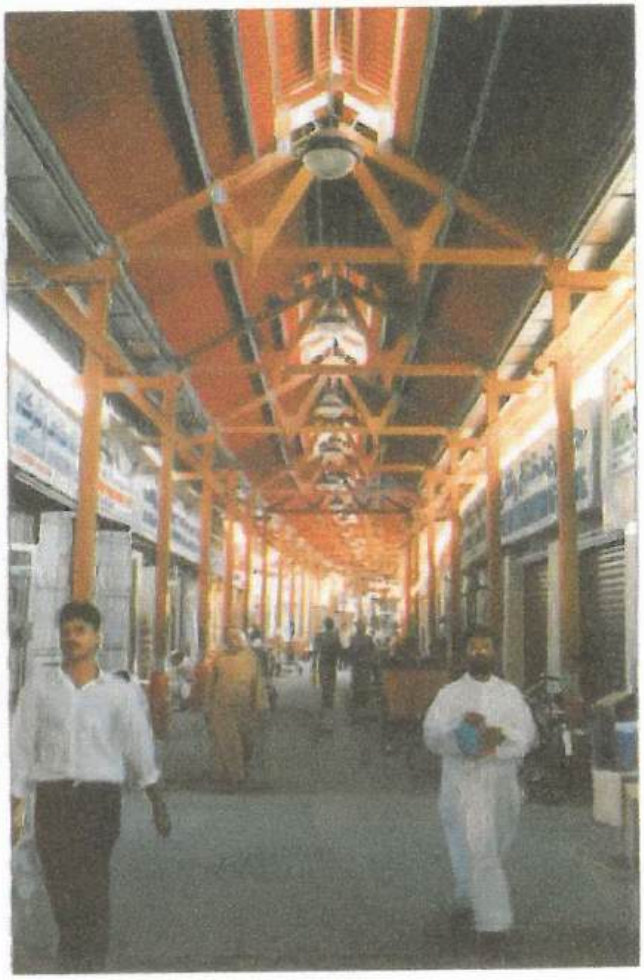
A consultant was appointed in 1995 for the plan to revive the village and furnish it to serve as a spot of tourist interest and place of heritage. This project will be completed in 1996 and become a significant addition to the efforts to revive the cultural heritage and urban history of the emirate.



CONSERVATION OF GRAND SOUQ, DEIRA







Top: Bird's eye view of Grand Souq, Deira
Above: Restoration of two-storeyed shops
Right: Covered pedestrian shopping mall

Al Souq-al-Kabeer or Grand Souq in Deira was built around 1850. It is of importance because of its proximity to the port extending along the Creek nearby, where, to this day, hundreds of sturdy wooden sailing vessels are docked, carrying a variety of goods back to their destinations as far apart as Somalia and the Indian sub-continent.

This necessitated the location of the Grand Souq, not only for the trading transactions, but the requirements of the crew of the vessels also. The Souq has shops selling a variety of goods from carpets to textiles, plastic goods and household items and groceries. The conservation of the architectural identity of the Souq, and the reviving of its original features represent a strong adherence to the original culture of the town and a continued understanding of its personality.

Dubai Municipality's project for the restoration of the traditional architectural identity and revival of the common features, was received with a positive response from the occupants, even though their activity was interrupted for some time during the execution of the project.

The Souq is along a narrow lane, where vehicular traffic has now been stopped. The planning of the shops is within a repeated framework of narrow rooms, not exceeding 30 square meters, which, though restricted does not lack the features of an architecture which gives them an elegant appearance. Some shops have the traditional wind-towers above them to provide a comfortable shopping atmosphere, and there are perforated gypsum screens on top of the doors for further cooling. Meanwhile their varied teak wood doors add to the visual identity of the Souq.

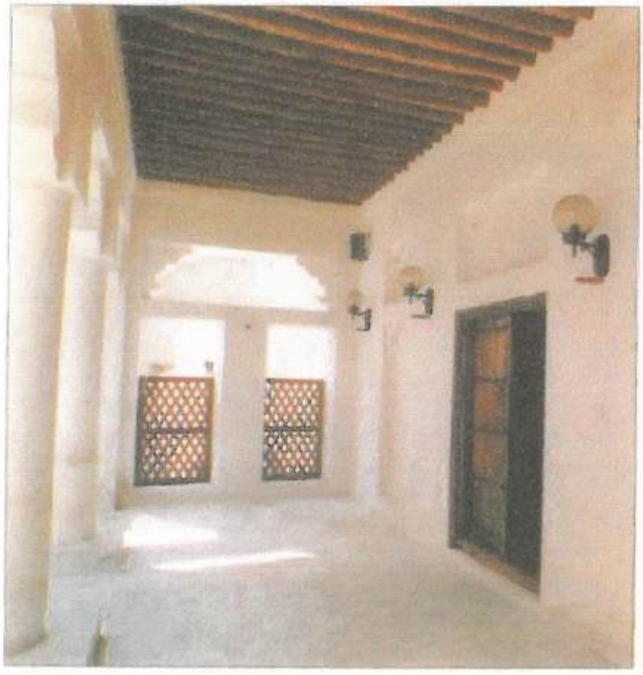
Most of the shops have only one storey, except for some buildings which have an upper floor to be used as an office. The lane passing through the Souq is covered with a shade of wooden trusses and G I sheeting, with lighting, for the convenience of the shoppers and the shop-keepers.

The restoration project aims at replacing the additions made to the facades in recent years, and restoring the traditional elements such as the wind-towers, shop signs, and teak wood doors, besides the gypsum decorative features. Modern requirements such as air-conditioning and electric lighting have been incorporated without their dominating the traditional character of the shops. Assistance has been obtained from historical documents, and old photographs to identify the original features of the buildings.

The execution of the project is being carried out in phases. The project was commenced in 1994 and should take about four years to complete. A fund of Dhs. 6 million has been provided to meet the cost.

LOOTAH MOSQUE







Left: Lootah Mosque in Deira. **Bottom, left:** Ante-room of prayer hall. **Bottom, right:** Interior of Mosque.

The Mosque of Nasser Bin Obaid Lootah, built around 1930, is located east of Al Ahmadiya School, and its location represents a point of focus connecting one of the main axis of pedestrians in Al Ahmadiya area, around which the lanes are also distributed.

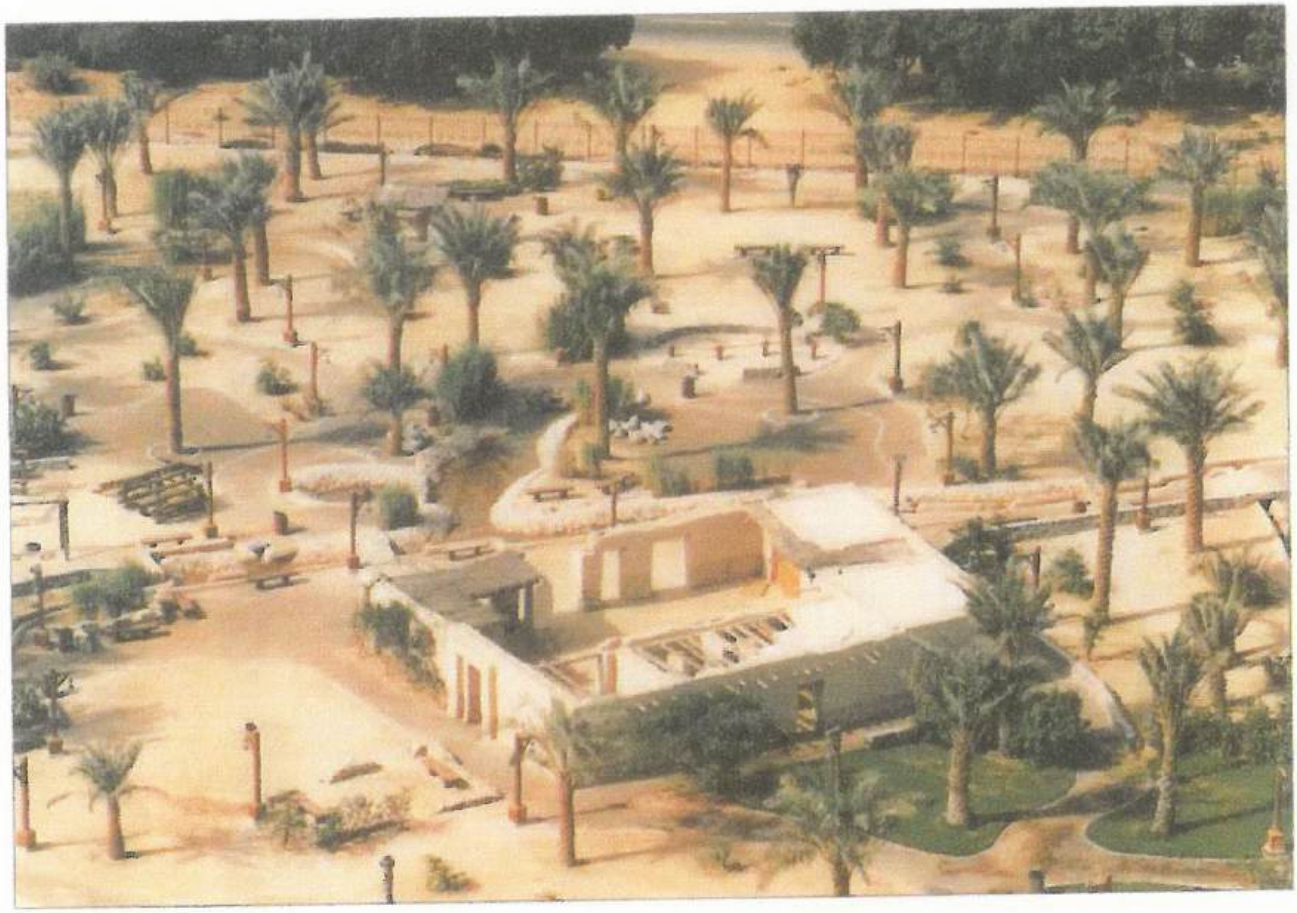
The Mosque has been restored in keeping with concepts of traditional mosque designs. However, this project was different from others because the original mosque had been demolished before its architecture could be recorded.

The Mosque consists of a prayer hall with two pillars along its centre, with the 'mehrab' (niche) of the 'imam' (prayer leader) in the external west wall, facing the 'Qibla' direction. The Mosque has a large number of windows in the traditional style down to the floor level. These are divided into two sections whereby the top and bottom halves can be opened or shut individually.

The entrance to the Mosque is through a lobby which leads into a passage. Along the passage is an arched ante-room to the prayer hall. On the left of the passage are the toilets and ablution areas. Towards the right is the 'imam's' room with a separate entrance and an electrical services room.

The restoration project included reconstruction of the foundations, walls and the roof, using traditional building materials, except for the toilets and ablution areas. The roof houses a central air-conditioning unit to meet the requirements of Al Ahmadiya School and the Heritage House situated nearby.

TRADITIONAL BUILDING IN CREEK PARK







Above: Bird's eye view of traditional farm-house in Creek Park. **Extreme left:** Entrance of House. **Left:** Mason plastering a wall with traditional mix.

This project aims at reviving the traditional architecture of the mountainous areas where constructions were different from those of the towns, with mud and stones replacing gypsum and coral.

Located in the Creek Park, the construction serves as an example to visitors of the materials and techniques of houses in the farms, and of the *falaj*, or irrigation channels, of the date palm farms located there.

The main building consists of three rooms around a large open courtyard. The rooms have traditional doors and windows. A small room serves as a kitchen. The exterior is devoid of any decoration. An open area near the entrance has a roof of palm thatch. A group of water channels irrigate the trees around the house.

The project was begun in 1993 as concentration was focused on the manufacture and usage of *sarooj* (burnt mud). The foundations and walls were made from small mountain stones. Sarooj and mud was used as plaster, and trunks of palm trees were used as lintels, beams, and roof supports, in addition to the traditional reeds. Portions of the roof construction have been left exposed so that visitors can get an idea of the building technique in the mountains.

TRADITIONAL CAFE IN MAMZAR PARK



This project aims at the revival of the old cafes, where traditional meals were served in simple surroundings, and visitors gathered in large numbers. It would serve as an example to the youth and children of a fast disappearing heritage which needs to be appreciated by them.

The Cafe is situated on the main road of Mamzar Park and covers an area of 2000 sq. meters. The entrance to the Cafe is through a gateway of exposed coral stone construction, topped by a wind-tower of *'chandel'* wood and palm tree fronds. A gypsum sign over the entrance reads "TRADITIONAL CAFE".

In the centre of the Cafe, on the axis of the entrance, is a construction of exposed coral stone in which are located the kitchen, stores and service areas, designed with open arches which allow the seated customers to see the food being prepared before them. The central axis leads through a rear door into the garden beyond.



Top: Traditional Cafe in Mamzar Park.
Above: Seating area with canopy of palm thatch.

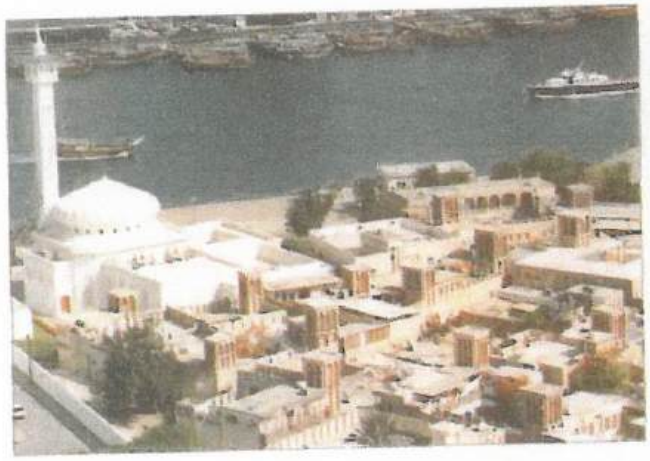
The Cafe seating is octagonal in shape around the kitchen area. This is covered over with a canopy of chandal wood and thatch, leaving the remaining area as an open patio. The seating area is divided along the north section into 20 cubicles, each to seat six persons, separated by a partition of reeds. This layout is repeated along the south section with minor changes, and it is reserved for families. The flooring is executed with natural stones. The patio is spread with colourful mats in fair weather for visitors who wish to sit on the floor. Traditional furniture of simple design with wooden benches and tables is provided for the customers. The light fittings are in the shape of the antique kerosene lamps, once common in the days before electricity in the Emirate.

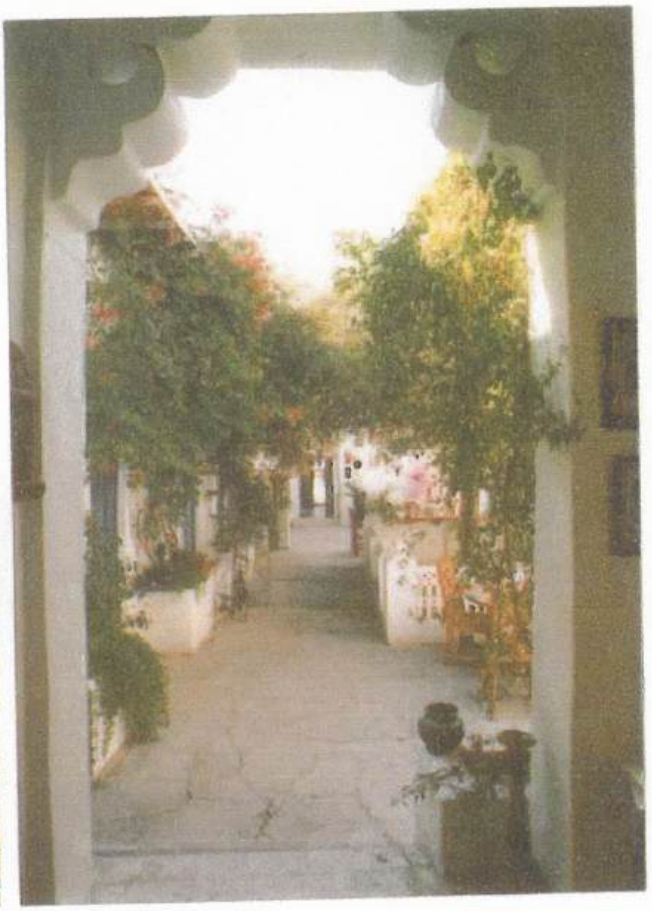
The project was completed in three months including the tables and chairs.

CONSERVATION OF AL BASTAKIA AREA

The Al Bastakia area in Bur Dubai dates back to the early 1900s, and occupies the eastern section of the old town along the Creek, extending to a length of 300 meters, and a depth of 200 meters in the southern direction. This area represents an important era in the history of architecture, and the urban development of the town. The masons who constructed the building, therein have left an indelible mark on the town's heritage.

The area has always fascinated visitors to Dubai and artists, who are enamoured by its elegant wind-towers, gypsum decorations and woodwork, and the lanes that meander through the district.



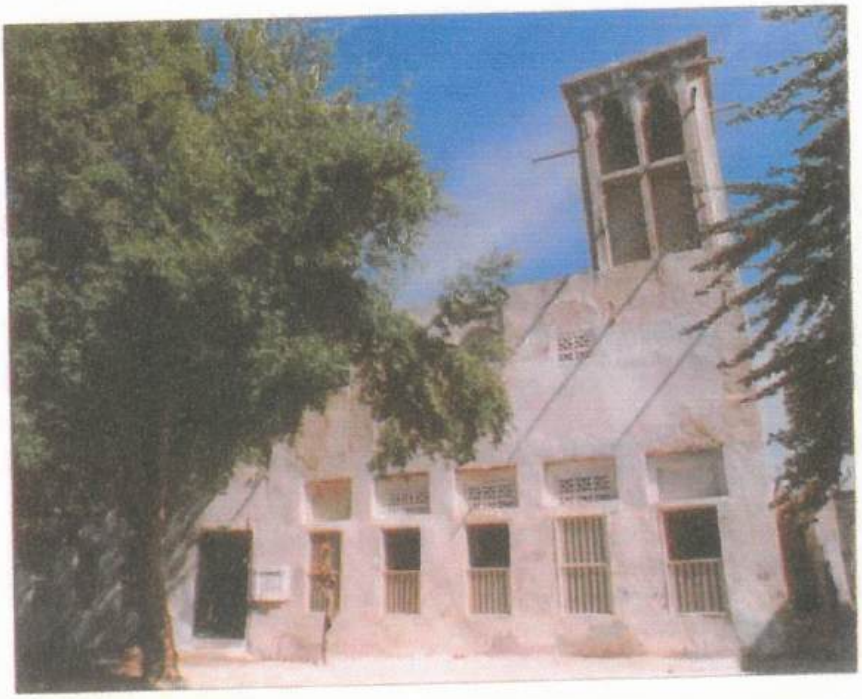


Dubai Municipality has shown a great interest in the conservation of Al Bastakia and prohibited all new construction so as not to disturb the original character of the area. A Consultant was appointed to carry out a survey of the buildings, study the architectural planning, and propose a work programme for the restoration of the area, and revive it by the adoption of several legislative and design options.

After approval of the general survey and drawings of the area, the first phase includes the development of the services and other facilities. The project also aims for Dubai Municipality to acquire the buildings and allocate them within a framework of comprehensive tourism and housing development.

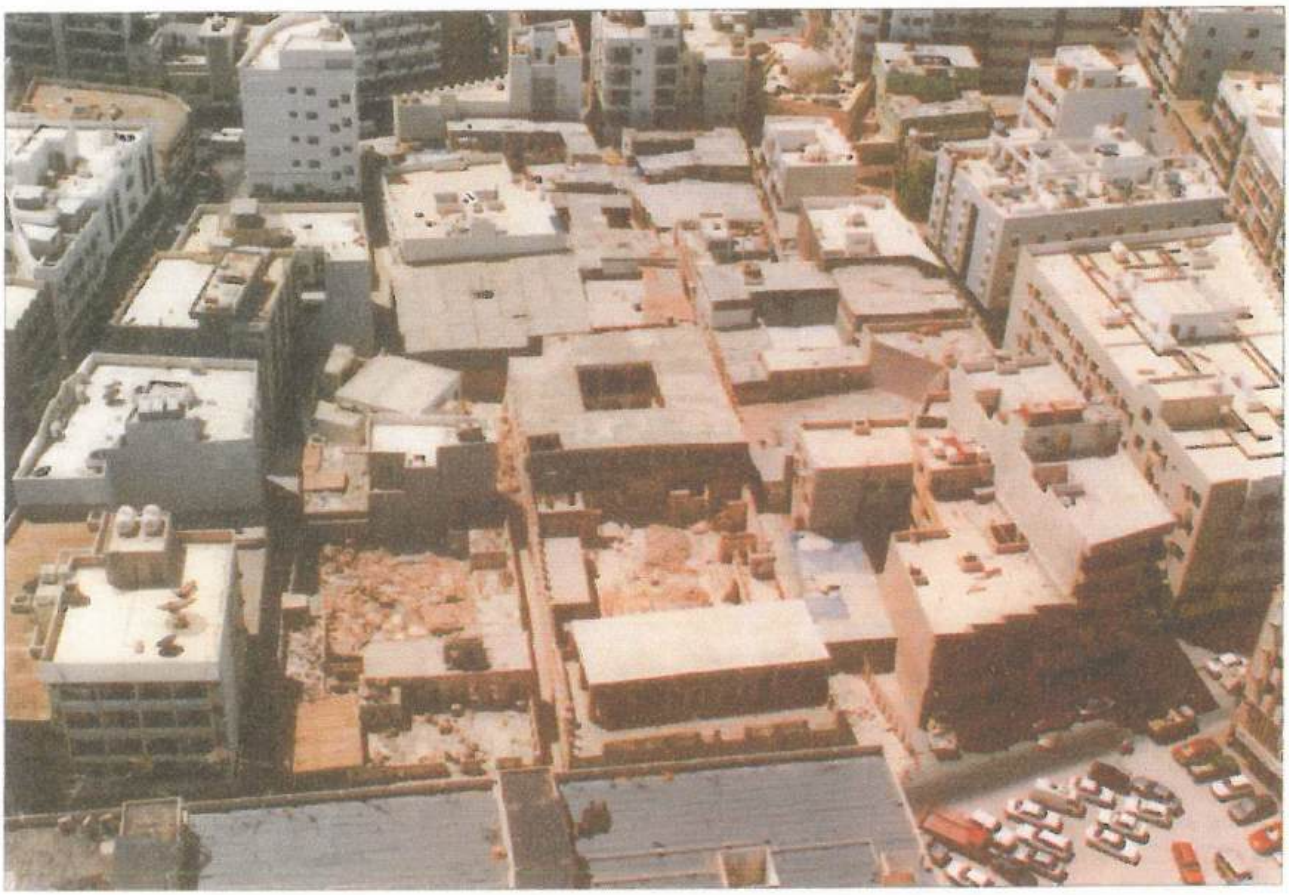
The second phase of the project will begin in 1996 when the Historical Buildings Section will undertake the execution of the restoration work in compliance with a general programme.

The third phase aims at restoring the remaining buildings in the area, and there after to begin with the programme of its employment and utilisation.



Top, left: Aerial view of Al Bastakia area with its wind-towers, and HH the Ruler's Mosque along the Creek. **Top, right:** Landscaped courtyard of a house. **Above:** A wind-tower house.

CONSERVATION OF AL AHMADIYA AREA



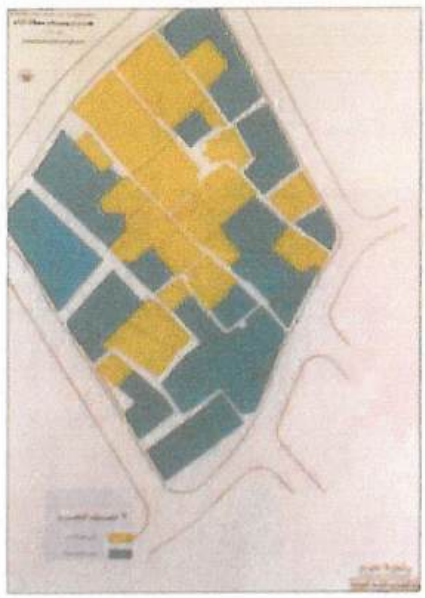
The Al Ahmadiya area is one of the old districts in Deira, dating back to the period when Ras Al Khor was formed. In the past it was a residential area for the traders of Deira and contained numerous private dwellings of leading merchants and dignitaries. This was in addition to the Al Ahmadiya School which catered to the children in the city.

The area includes a group of buildings around Al Ahmadiya School. These buildings are unique and as such it is necessary to conserve and revive their architecture and design.

The programme aims at the conservation of the architectural heritage of the Emirate of Dubai. Besides restoring the traditional buildings, the project will also give attention to the planning features of the lanes, and the percentage of open spaces and built-up areas, in order to convert the district into a museum of traditional architecture.

The traditional buildings with their varied sizes, plans and usages, reflect an integrated concept of traditional architecture, and could, through a programme of their utilisation, revive the traditional industries and activities of the ancient crafts of the region.

The programme also extends to the modern buildings adjacent to the traditional ones in order to re-organise their external features, so that these reflect the visual elements of traditional architecture.





Top: Aerial view of Al Ahmadiya area with traditional buildings in the middle.
Above, left: Layout Plan with traditional buildings (yellow) and modern construction (blue).
Above: Proposed Plan for modifying elevations of adjacent buildings (blue) to conform with the traditional (yellow). Other buildings (red) will have to conform when owners submit new proposals.

CONSERVATION OF GRAND SOUQ, BUR DUBAI

The Grand Souq of Bur Dubai is the oldest and most important market in the city. It has gained the city its reputation and made it famous. The Grand Souq reflects the city's identity with its mixture of residential and commercial buildings within a framework of planning relationship that is worthy of study.

There is also a degree of interaction between the architectural elements known in Dubai, such as the varied wind-towers, gypsum decorations as also the structural spaces. The Creek and old walls of the town give it an identity that represents a distinguished and integrated urban society.

Dubai Municipality has planned the conservation of this Grand Souq within the framework of preserving the town's heritage. The project is divided into phases compatible with the vitality and life of the market. It is therefore necessary not to harm the interests of the nationals or endanger the structures of the historical buildings.

The project has commenced by concentrating on the basic features such as wind-tower group of buildings and facades of the structures along the main axis of the Souq.

The project deals with the private properties through the grant offered for their restoration and maintenance. This is given provided certain controls are exercised to sustain the efforts of conservation, and the assistance complies with the administrative requirements over the commercial signs, advertisements and encroachments made on the roofs of buildings. In addition to that the Architectural Heritage Conservation Committee shall also exercise follow-up action in respect of the building controls of new applications, and procedures of maintenance and architectural alterations.





Top: Shops with variety of shop signs and obstructions. **Above:** Aerial view of Grand Souq, Bur Dubai with wind-tower shops.

CONSERVATION OF DUBAI CREEK ELEVATIONS

Dubai Creek presents the first impression which visitors usually get of the town's history and heritage, with its bustling activity, the 'abra' (ferries) crossing to and fro, the numerous boats docked along its banks, a variety of goods stacked nearby on the Deira side, and much more.

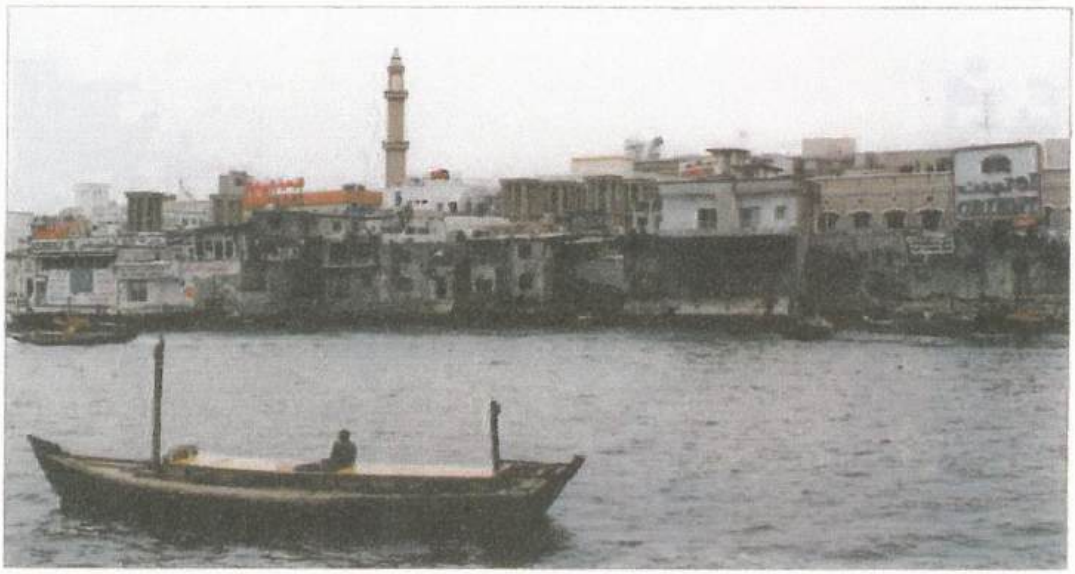
Equally important are the elevations of the buildings which overlook the Creek and give it that ambience on the Bur Dubai side. Their location overlooks the beehive of activity across the Creek. The structures link the new building of the Ruler's Office, Diwan, with its traditional architecture, and the modern buildings behind the old Grand Souq. There is great contradiction and lack of harmony in the architecture, particularly of the modern constructions, as can be seen from the photographs taken by the early travellers in the middle of this century, when compared with the scene today.

The project undertaken by Dubai Municipality does not aim so much at the conservation of the buildings along the Creek, as on providing for the maintenance of their elevations, to give them a better appearance and remove the deterioration that has taken place over the years. This necessitates the preservation of the traditional pattern on which they were originally built. The project also aims at the removal of the encroachments and projections added later, besides the need to restrict the signs and hoardings that distort the architectural harmony of the area.

It is not the aim to interfere with the several proposals concerning the Creek and developments of its elevations. It only seeks to provide harmony in some of the old buildings with a preferred architectural style. The interest directed to the urbanisation of the town is not entirely focused on its modern areas but on the town as a whole, ensuring that it is populated by people who are involved with it, and in it.

The project is divided into phases, each of which involves one or two buildings within the length between the Ruler's Office in the east, and the building of the old British Bank of the Middle East along the Creek.

The first phase includes restoration of the elevation of a building overlooking the Creek, traditional replastering, and installation of traditional windows. It is also proposed to repair the traditional toilet. The project is expected to be completed in 50 working days.





Top: View of buildings along Creek on Bur Dubai side. **Above:** Neglected buildings along Creek.

DUBAI MUNICIPALITY



بلدية دبي



Dar Al Maal Al Islami

•••

Islamic Investment Companies

•

Massaref Faysal Al Islamia

(Islamic Banks)

•

Islamic Takafol Companies

(The Islamic Alternative to Western Insurance)

•

Islamic Business Enterprises

•

84 Avenue Louis-Casai · 1216 Cointrin · Geneva
Phone (022) 791 71 11 · Telex 415 354 FSS CH · Fax (022) 791 75 62

PIA Flies You To The Heart Of The East.



Our hospitable service is tailored to suit your needs:

08 Flights From UK To Pakistan Weekly

- 2 Direct flights from London to Karachi.
- 2 Direct flights from London to Dubai and onward to Karachi.
- 2 Flights from London to Islamabad.
- 2 Direct weekly flights from Manchester to Islamabad.

- Extensive domestic network, linking you to Lahore, historic city of Mughal grandeur.

Convenient onward connections from Karachi, Lahore and Islamabad to Bangkok, Beijing, Colombo, Dhaka, Jakarta, Kathmandu, Kuala Lumpur, Male', Manila, Singapore, Tokyo and cities in Central Asia.

- Expressly geared towards both the busy traveller and the adventurous tourist.

Whether travelling for business or pleasure, our luxurious and up-to-date aircraft will fly you with traditional hospitality and care to Pakistan - and onwards to the rest of the world.



PIA is always expanding its network to bring more places to you.

For further information please contact your nearest travel agent or PIA booking office.

PIA Offices: **London:** 071-734 5544 (Reservations) 081-741 8066 (Administration) **Heathrow:** 081-759 2544
Manchester: 061-839 7505/7506 **Birmingham:** 021-643 7850/7032/5210 **Bradford:** 0274-731705/731804
Glasgow: 041-221 9936

PIA
Pakistan International
Great people to fly with