



DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

Looking at IAMM's calendar of events, one must be pleased with all the efforts exerted by our various departments to keep our visitors in Kuala Lumpur and abroad inspired and engaged. This is beyond doubt a collective effort from the curatorial, education, and conservation teams, and surely not without the assistance from other departments. The museum is always alive with groups of visitors, reading information panels, attending workshops, and discovering more about the artefacts through our yearlong, in-depth curator's sharing sessions. "The Story of Coffee" exhibition, as well as its complementing educational activities, were all a great success. Our main exhibition galleries are still vibrant with visitors amazed by the new ideas as they walk through the "Qajar Ceramics: Bridging Tradition & Modernity" and the "Conservation: Craft or Science?" exhibitions.

We are in the coming season all set to bring this year to a very successful end. We shall launch in a few days the latest British Museum–IAMM collaborative exhibition, "Inspired by the East: How the Islamic World Influenced Western Art" (October 2019–January 2020). The exhibition and its accompanying catalogue bring visitors to another level of knowledge on the mutual respect between East and West through the display of Western paintings yet reflecting the lands of the East.

The upcoming season will also welcome enthusiastic and competitive architects to IAMM to take part in the conference and exhibition on the "Future: Mosque: Architecture: Mosques in the 21st Century and Beyond," in collaboration with the Abdullatif Al Fozan Award for Mosque Architecture (AFAMA). This important international event is certainly a breakthrough in scholarship with its special emphasis on environmentally conscious structures and architectural solutions.

Every season we share with you a scholarly article authored by one of our promising members. This time around, we share an interesting discovery: a Malay Letter dispatched from Mecca to Kampung Kelapa, in the state of Reman. Our interest to highlight that the Malay world's relationship with the Muslim heartlands is certainly alive; a fact that is especially reflected in the refurbishment process of the IAMM Malay World gallery on the first floor. Please join us in subscribing for free to our newsletter, contribute new ideas, and become a member of our Museum Family.

Syed Mohamad Albukhary



A Memlook Bey, Egypt 1863 by John Frederick Lewis (1804–1876 CE), watercolour on paper, 20.5 × 15.5 cm, collection of Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia.

EVENTS CALENDAR

18th OCTOBER 2018 – MID-AUGUST 2020

Travelling Exhibition:
The Arabesque: An Introduction
at the British Museum, London.



21st MARCH – 31st DECEMBER 2019



Special Exhibition:
Qajar Ceramics: Bridging Tradition &
Modernity at the Special Gallery II

24th JUNE – 31st OCTOBER 2019

Exhibition:
Conservation: Craft or Science?
at the Special Gallery I



10th JULY – 15th OCTOBER 2019



Exhibition:
The Story of Coffee
at the Open Space Gallery

10th October 2019 – 26th January 2020

Exhibition:
Inspired by the East: How the
Islamic World influenced Western
Art at the British Museum, London.



21st NOVEMBER 2019 – 31st December 2019



25–28 November 2019
Conference:
International Conference on Mosque
Architecture (ICMA 2019)

21 November – 31 January 2019
Exhibition:
Abdullatif Alfozan Award for
Mosque Architecture (AFAMA)

"HAJJ JOURNEY THROUGH THE AGES"

Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia collaborative exhibition with
The Barakat Trust from 13th December 2019



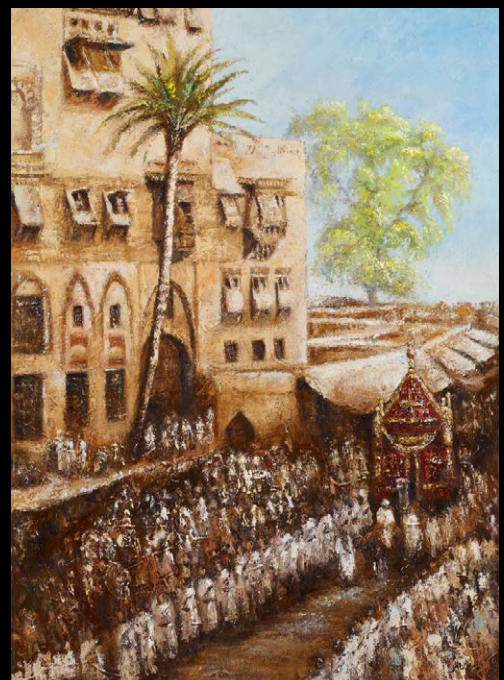
Prayer at the Masjidil Haram of Mecca, with the Kaabah as the focal point.

The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, in collaboration with The Barakat Trust, is proudly bringing to Malaysia a special exhibition "Hajj Journey Through the Ages", on display from 13th December 2019 until March 2020.

The exhibition highlights a series of paintings by Saudi artist Reem Nazir, who explores the history of the Hajj, a pilgrimage to the Holy City of Makkah, which is one of the five pillars of Islam, including a visit to the Holy City of Madinah. These paintings are inspired by archive photographs, mostly from The Barakat Trust and Royal Geographical Society, and based on first-hand accounts of pilgrims, travellers, and authors from the 9th to the 20th centuries.

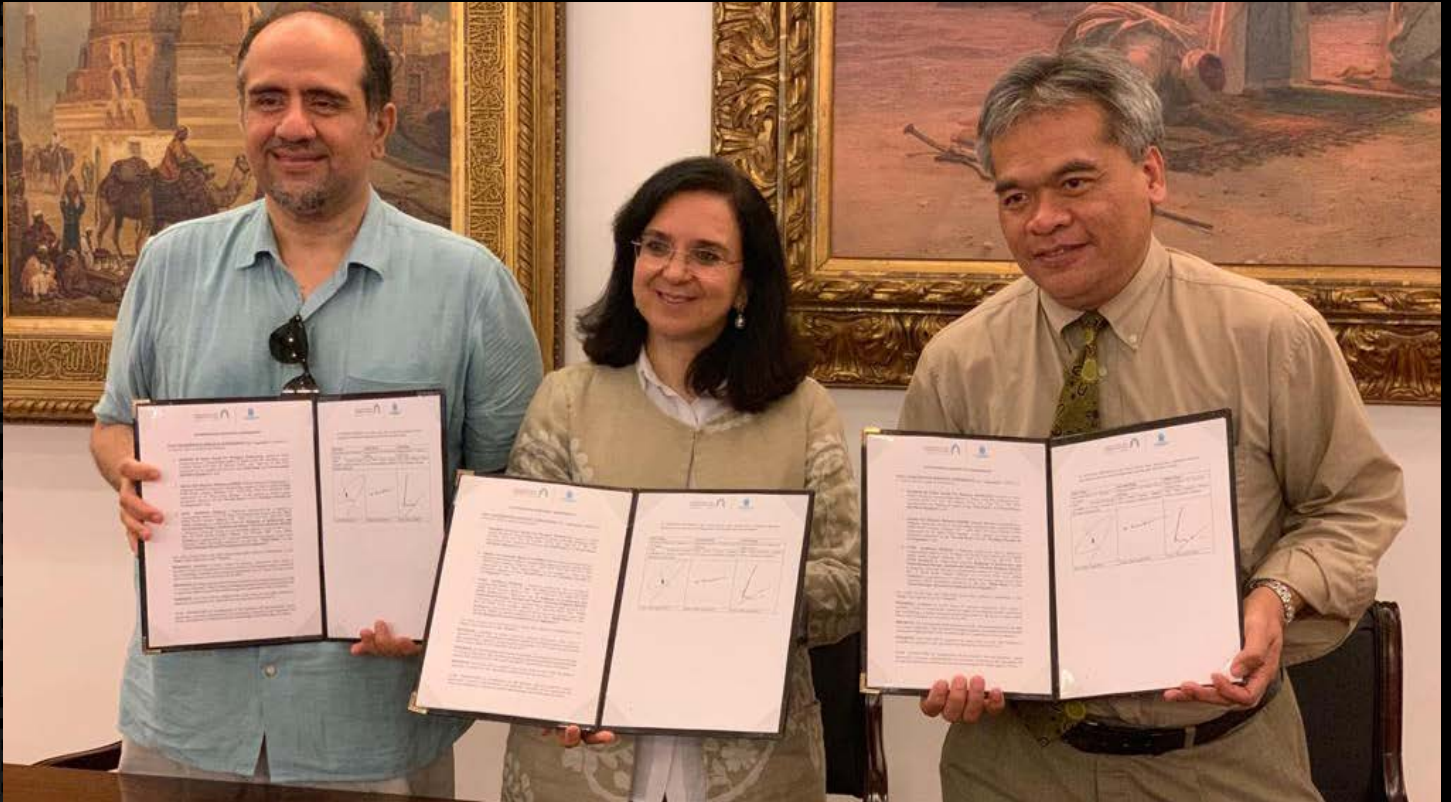
This series of artworks that consist of 44 original oil paintings – 43 of which have been exhibited previously in Jeddah in 2013 and Madinah in 2014, as well as at the Royal Geographical Society, London in 2015 -- will be exhibited at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur by the end of this year.

The artist, Reem Nazir has previously exhibited her work in Jeddah, Riyadh, Buenos Aires, Moscow, Agadir and Santa Fe as well as at the Leighton House Museum in London.



Among the 44 original oil paintings by Reem Nazir, being displayed in the exhibition.

INNOVATIVE MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE REWARDED WITH THE ABDULLATIF AL FOZAN AWARD 2019



The Secretary-General of the Award, Dr. Mashary Al-Naim (in blue shirt), signed a multilateral framework agreement with all the ICMA organizing parties of the Second International Conference on Mosques Architecture.

Established in 2011, the Abdullatif Al Fozan Award for Mosque Architecture addresses novel ideas for mosque design around the world and encourages innovation in planning, designing and technology that represent the contemporary mosques architecture.

The triennial award was initiated based on the possible added value to mosque architecture, and how its rebirth and matching contemporary challenges can be made while giving cities their identities. Besides the form, other vital parameters such as urban issues and context that influence mosque architecture were also taken into consideration. The socio-cultural impact of the mosque and its role in shaping social practices within a local network that binds individuals in the community visually, functionally and emotionally are also evaluated. Hence, the nominated mosques will be placed into three categories: central mosques, Jumaah mosques and local mosques

Accompanying the award will be a photo exhibition and the International Conference on Mosque Architecture (ICMA 2019) from 25 to 27 November 2019 at IAMM. The conference will attract scholars and renowned architects worldwide in an intellectual discourse to achieve the practical and scientific

vision of the future architecture of mosques from the underlying function, design, technology and structures.

ICMA 2019 is under the patronage of HRH Prince Sultan bin Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Chairman, Board of Trustees of Abdullatif Alfozan Award for Mosque Architecture (AFAMA) and President, Saudi Space Commission (SSC). It is jointly organised by the Kulliyyah of Architecture and Environmental Design (KAED), International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM), Imam Abdulrahman Bin Faisal University (IAU), Dammam, Saudi Arabia, King Fahd University of Petroleum and Minerals (KFUPM), Dhahran, Saudi Arabia and ATSA Architects, Malaysia.

The photo exhibition showcasing the 27 nominated mosques design will be displayed at IAMM's Open Space Gallery from 21 November 2019 to 31 January 2020.

MALAYS IN MECCA: A LETTER TO KAMPUNG KEPALA BUKIT BERAPIT, REMAN

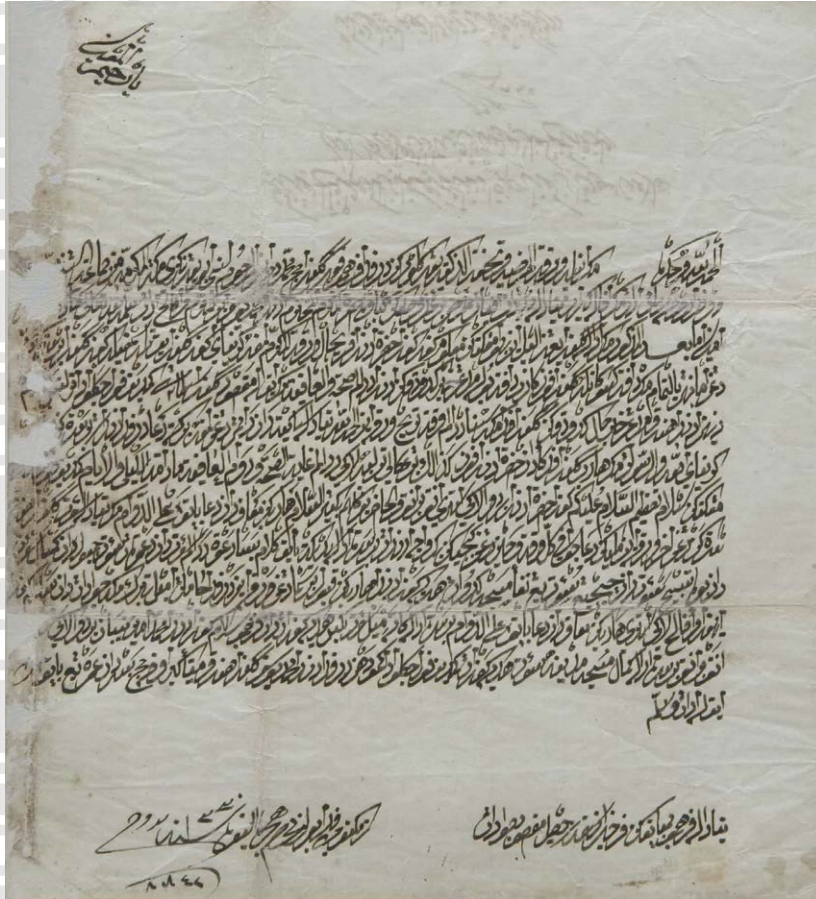


Image 1: Front side of the letter with a heading at the top, an empty right margin, with a closure statement "Termaktub" at the lower left with Arabic alphabets and numerals, b-d-u-h 2-4-6-8 (IAMM 1998.1.2277).

The Hijaz (Mecca and Medina) has long been an important intellectual centre for Southeast Asian Muslims to learn various subjects taught by scholars from the Malay world diaspora, particularly Shaykh Daud bin Abdullah al-Fathani (1183-1263 AH / 1769-1847 AD), especially during 19th century.¹ It was a chance not to be missed for those who travelled for the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimage to stay longer to deepen their Islamic knowledge so that they could return home and open an Islamic school (*pondok*) to spread the knowledge. Some remained forever, creating a community in Mecca and Medina which exists until today.²

The Hijaz was also a place of refuge, in particular for the Patani Muslims who decided to leave their home country due to the invasions and oppressions of the Kingdom of Patani by the Siamese from 1785-1839. Letters were written back and forth to the families, relatives and friends back home to comfort them and to reassure that they were doing fine in the land of Hijaz. Some would ask for help if they had been longing to return home (IAMM 1998.1.3665) or needed money to build their homes in Mecca (IAMM 1998.1.3678); some would never forget to send a gift to accompany the letter through trusted pilgrims (IAMM

"jikalau ada {...} dhihni adinda hendak mendengar khabar hal kedudukan kekanda di Mekah sana di dalam waktu warkah ini, Alhamdulillah tiadalah sakit dan demamnya dengan limpah berkat doa daripada adinda..."

– Haji Muhammad Deh, Mekah,
1330 H / 1911 M.

"If there is {...} (in) your mind wants to know the news of my state, there in Mecca at the time (I am writing) this letter, praise be to Allah, I have no sickness and fever, due to the abundant blessings of your prayers ..."

– Haji Muhammad Deh, Mecca,
1330 AH / 1911 AD.

1998.1.3360), which they refer them as the "*hamil*" (carrier). Sometimes, they would wait patiently gathering letters to be sent to their villages with the help of the *hamil*.

These nostalgic items of correspondence between the Malays or Patani Malays in Mecca and their friends and relatives back home in Reman and Patani, dated 1891-1912, are in the safekeeping of the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia. Reman, one of the territories that emerged from the dissolution of Patani in 1810, is located some twenty miles upstream from the mouth of the Patani river at Kota Bahru, where the first Raja of Reman, Tuan Mansur resided. Probably due to the tin-rich Kroh plateau in Upper Perak,³ the ruler of Reman was able to give an endowment (*waqf*) in Mecca to provide a place to stay for Malays in the Hijaz, such as the House of Reman (*Rumah Reman*).

For this first article about the Malays in Mecca, we are featuring a letter, IAMM 1998.1.2277, the sender of which performed the Hajj and Umrah pilgrimage in 1911. The year recorded the highest number of Malays to travel by steamship for the Hajj before the outbreak of World War I following the boom in rubber prices.⁴

The letter, written in beautiful Riq'a regional style, dated Muharram, 1330 AH (December 1911 AD) is from Haji Muhammad Deh ibn al-Marhum Le[n]bai Abu, who resided at the House of Reman, Mecca to Muhammad Yusuf ibn al-Mukarram Wak Pak Leh, who was living in Kampung Kepala Bukit Berapit, Reman. In the letter, Haji Muhammad Deh informed that he had received his letter and was glad to know the news from back home. He also mentioned that if Muhammad Yusuf had been wondering about his well-being, he was doing well (not sick or having a fever), due to the blessings of his prayers. He also hoped for the same blessings for Muhammad Yusuf. He then continued sending his regards (*salam takzim*) to him, his wife and children and a small prayer to them.

Together with the letter, he gave a few gifts, including *tasbih* (prayer beads) and dates, to Muhammad Yusuf, his father Wak Pak Leh, and Muhammad Amin, their wives and children, which were to be picked up from the *hamil*. At the end of the letter, he sent his regards (*salam*) to Wak Pak Leh, Muhammad Amin and Muhammad Yusuf and their families. He also asked that whenever Muhammad Yusuf was not occupied (or at ease) to pray the he will have a blessed Hajj or Umrah.

Looking closely at the outline of this letter (Image 1), written alternately in Arabic and Malay, it generally follows the rules of Malay letter writing in a manual known as *Kitab Terasul*.⁵ Minus the lavish decorated royal letters and a royal seal, the letter begins with the third rule of *Kitab Terasul* – the heading reads: “*Ya Rahman Ya Mu'in*” (O The Merciful, The Reliever). This is followed by compliments mentioning the names, titles and addresses of the sender and recipient, which begin with the phrase “*Alhamdulillah wahdah*” (all praise to Allah). The fourth rule applied to the content of the letter, which begins with “*ammaba' dahu*” (and then) and towards the end of the content, the sender would state the gifts accompanying the letter. The gifts are not only material objects but could also be any form of prayers, sincere regards and greetings. The letter ended with the closing statement with the word “*Termaktub*” and included the date that he letter was written, which in this case was Muharram, 1330 AH. Unlike letters meant for courtly and official matters, there is no envelope.

The letter is folded, and the reverse is written with the address and the name of the receiver as “*Alamat surat ini kepada hadrah adinda Muhammad Yusuf ibn al-Mukarram Wak Pak Leh yang di Negeri Reman pada Kampung Kepala Bukit Berapit adanya {...} Amin*” [The letter is addressed to (my brother) Muhammad Yusuf ibn al-Mukarram Wak Pak Leh in Reman at Kampung Kepala Bukit Berapit {...} Amin]. The name and address of the sender are also written on this page with this letter, which reads: “*Daripada kekanda Muhammad Deh ibn al-Marhum Le[n]bai Abu di Mekah di Rumah Reman adanya*” [From (your brother) Muhammad Deh ibn al-Marhum Le[n]bai Abu in Mecca, House of Reman (Image 2).

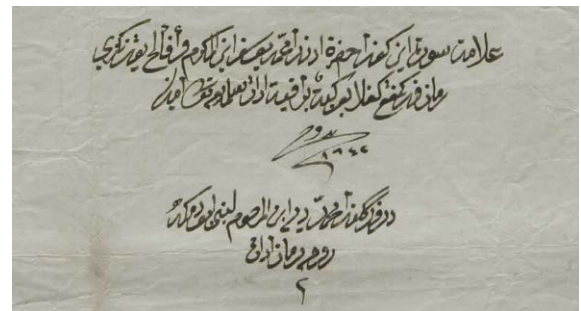


Image 2: Reverse side of the letter with the address of the recipient (upper part) and the sender (lower part). Note the b-d-u-h alphabets and 2-4-6-8 numerals after the recipient's name and address (IAMM 1998.1.2277).

It is interesting to note the use of talismanic numbers at the end of the closing statement of the letter “*Termaktub pada bulan Muharram hijrah al-nabi sanah 1330 b-d-u-h gh2-4-6-8*” (Written in the month of Muharram the year Hijri 1330 b-d-u-h 2-4-6-8) and the reverse side of the letter with the names of the receiver and his address. It was believed that these Arabic numerals and the word known as *buduh* contain auspicious properties and were used throughout the Islamic world as amulets for the safe delivery of the letter.⁶

Throughout this personal correspondence, Haji Muhammad Deh referred to himself as *kekanda* (older brother or sister) and to Muhammad Yusuf as *adinda* (younger brother or sister). Being a humble Muslim, he also used the term “*perhamba fakir*” (literally, I am the poor) when referring to himself. Although the nature of their relationship is unclear, it shows traditional Malay courtesy when carrying oneself, even in the art of letter writing.

Further readings:

- 1) Bradley, Frances R. *Forging Islamic Power and Place: The Legacy of Shaykh Da'ud bin 'Abd Allah al-Fatani in Mecca and Southeast Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 2016, pp. 68-74 & 100-109.
- 2) Muhammad Arafat Bin Mohamad. "Be-longing: Fatanis in Makkah and Jawi." PhD diss. Harvard University, 2013.
- 3) King, Phillip, "A Tin Mine in Need of a History: 19th Century British Views of the Patani Interior" in *The Phantasm in Southern Thailand: Historical Writings on Patani and the Islamic World*. Eds. Patrick Jory and Jirawat Saengthong. Bangkok, Thailand: 2009, pp. 485-498.
- 4) Aiza Maslan Baharudin. "Hajj and the Malayan Experience, 1860s-1941." *KEMANUSIAAN: The Asian Journal of Humanities* 2, no.2 (2014): 79-98.
- 5) Gallop, Annabel Teh, Ernst Ulrich Kratz, and Arkib Negara Malaysia. *The Legacy of the Malay letter: Warisan Warkah Melayu = Warisan Warkah Melayu*. London: British Library Publishing Division, 1994, p.33.
- 6) Feener, R. Micheal. *Mapping the Acehnese Past*. Leiden: KITLV Press, 2011, p. 270.

INSPIRED BY THE EAST: HOW THE ISLAMIC WORLD INFLUENCED WESTERN ART

Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia collaborative exhibition with the British Museum 10 October 2019 – 26 January 2020

The British Museum



**Inspired by
the east
how the
Islamic world
influenced
western art**

10 October 2019 –
26 January 2020

Open late Fridays
Members/under 16s free

Supported by
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Coming
soon

School of Western (1525–1585)
A Portrait of Sultan Baitash
C. 1570–1580
© Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia



This architectural maquette of the Sala del Reposo in the Alhambra by Spanish Diego Fernández Castro is displayed in the exhibition.

Mutual respect and inspiration are two elements of East-West dialogue that are often overlooked. There has never been a better time to revive what used to be a vigorous cultural exchange. The joint exhibition between the British Museum and the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia is a living proof of this continuity – conceived and developed by both museums. Two institutions, one in the West and one in the East, are transporting visitors to somewhere in the middle. The exhibits are the same in both locations, as is the message: “how the Islamic world influenced Western art”.

The two institutions that came together to create this exhibition have different strengths and backgrounds. There is also a paradox: the British Museum, located in the West, has perhaps the greatest collection of Islamic art in the world, while the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia has Western paintings that do not exist at the British Museum and have not been displayed before. By aligning the two collections, visitors to the exhibition in

both locations can view the full picture of what is usually termed ‘Orientalist’ art.

The popularity of these paintings in the past cannot be overstated. Over the last few centuries there have been fads in the West for the art of China, Japan and ancient Egypt. None of these had the power to engage Western audiences for as long as the Islamic world did. Art enthusiasts clamoured for views of deserts and cityscapes of what was then called the ‘Orient’. These not only appealed to their visual senses, they were also fascinated by a culture they wanted to understand. For the past forty years the words of the scholar Edward W. Said have had a powerful effect in persuading people of the opposite. His area of expertise was literature, not visual art, and it shows in his writing. With ‘Inspired by the East’ we hope to reclaim the ‘Orientalist’ word.

THE STORY OF COFFEE COMING TO AN END

The Story of Coffee is among IAMM's special exhibitions that has attracted the highest number of visitors, local and overseas. Featured in numerous articles worldwide including the Medieval Magazine in the USA, the Malaysian Reserve, The Star, Hijab & Heels (NST Press) and Dewan Masyarakat, the exhibition highlights coffee culture and hospitality in different regions of Muslim world. The exhibition showcases how valuable coffee is as a commodity with the power in the past to entice colonisers and others to the coffee-belt regions, and how it affects an astonishing range of people today.

The exhibition is accompanied by an abundance of hands-on and tantalising programmes for visitors (as listed on page 10). Among the highlights is the event on 1 October, held in conjunction with the International Coffee Day celebration, which will share the hidden meanings and symbolism in Muslim's coffee culture as well as exploring the gustatory part of describing coffee.



One of the curators of the exhibition, Dalia Mohamed explaining about the Arabian coffee culture to the audience.

SIXTEENTH-CENTURY ISLAMIC GRAVESTONES FROM THE MALAY WORLD DISCUSSED AT THE AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF CAIRO (AUC).



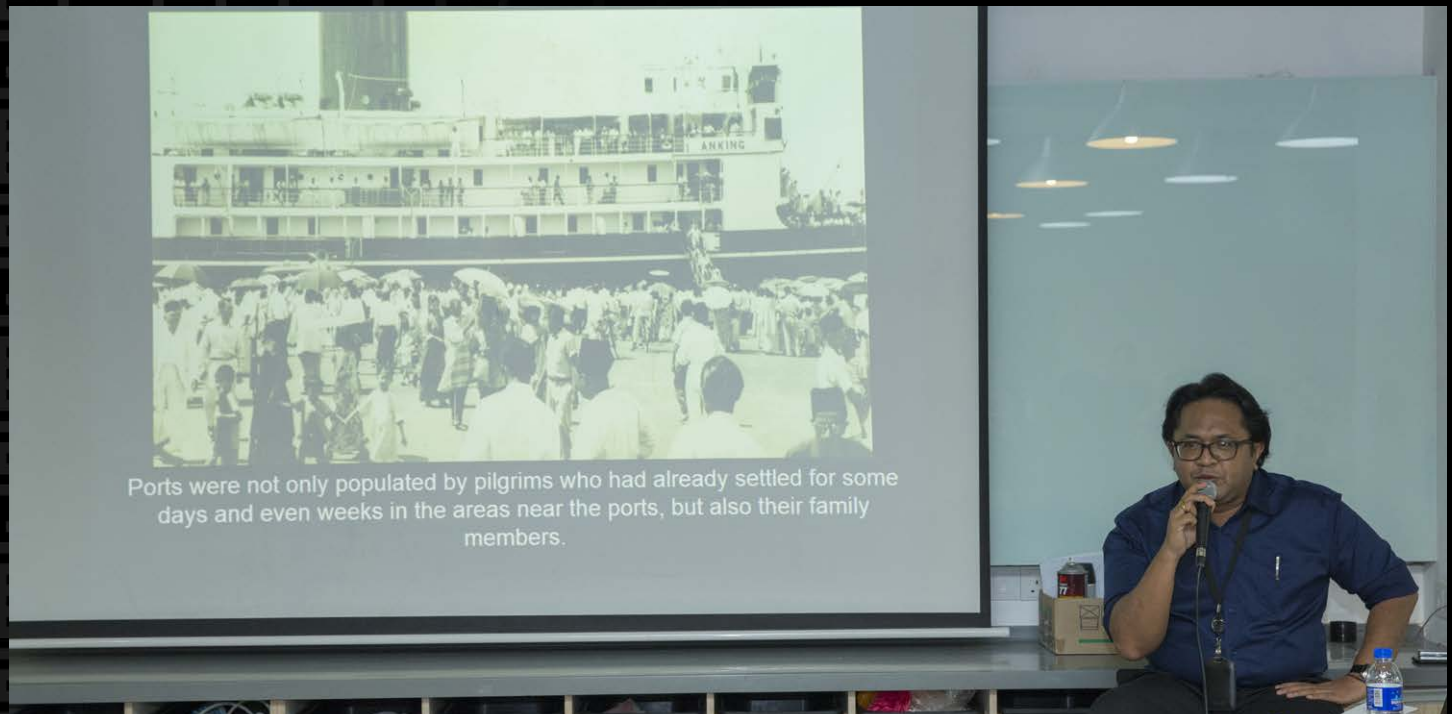
One of the 4 tombstones at Kampung Raja in Pagoh, Johor that was discussed in the presentation.

One of the remarkable sources for the history of the Islamic world is the inscriptions in Arabic, Persian, Turkish and other languages. The earliest Arabic inscriptions represent some of our earliest firmly dated Muslim sources for Islamic history, while in later periods inscriptions often establish unique contemporary evidence for not just the building activities sponsored by rulers and high officials, but also raw historical data such as dates of rulers and events.

In conjunction with the International Conference on Inscriptions from the Islamic World, IAMM represented by Dr Heba Nayel Barakat and Nurul Iman Rusli discussed sixteenth-century Islamic gravestones from the Malay world, particularly tombstones produced towards the end of the Melakan Sultanate in Peninsular Malaysia, which date from the end of the 15th century to the early 16th century, that used Arabic and Jawi inscriptions.

The conference, which took place at the American University in Cairo, Egypt on the 6 to 8 September 2019, was organised jointly by the AUC's School of Libraries and Learning Technologies, the AUC Department of Arabic and Islamic Studies, and the Centre for Anatolian and East Mediterranean Studies at the University of St Andrews. It also discussed other topics on new approaches to documenting inscriptions, inscriptions and religious texts, epigraphic style and form, inscriptions and religious life, inscriptions and royal power, inscriptions in the Maghreb, funerary inscriptions, inscriptions as historical sources, inscriptions of the Turkic World, and also artistic practices.

CURATOR'S SHARING SESSION FOR THE MONTHS OF JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019



Zulkifli Ishak presenting 'The Pilgrimage to Mecca: Stories from the Malay World'.

Since January 2019, we have been conducting monthly discourses with our curators, known as 'Curator's Sharing Session'. The programme allows the public to have a comprehensive understanding about our collection and the stories behind the artefacts.

Between the months of July and September there were three talks with the curators.

Zulkifli Ishak's presentation titled 'The Pilgrimage to Mecca: Stories from the Malay World' was in July. Zulkifli shared the manuscripts, mainly letters and travel accounts of the Malay world from the early 19th century onwards.

In August, Hariz Kamal's talk was about the 'Soul of Malay Wood Carving' where he elaborated on the plausible connection between 19th century Malay wood artefacts with Islamic teachings and explored the unique philosophies in the intricate designs of the Malay world.

Nurul Iman Rusli, on the other hand, presented on the 'Epigraphic Pottery of the Samanid Dynasty (819-1005)' in September, highlighting the art of calligraphy as a form of decoration on ceramics from medieval Iran and Central Asia during the ninth to eleventh centuries.



Hariz Kamal discussing about the 'Soul of Malay Wood Carving'.



Nurul Iman explaining the 'Epigraphic Pottery of the Samanid Dynasty (819-1005)'.

TALK BY DR. IMRAN TAJUDEEN ON MOSQUE ARCHITECTURE IN MELAKA IN HISTORICAL AND REGIONAL CONTEXT

Date : 27 July 2019

Venue : Auditorium, IAMM

This public talk saw architecture historian Dr Imran bin Tajudeen examining the translation of various architectural features from the pre-Islamic period into the 15th century. He brought into account the identity of mosques in Melaka based on its position in Southeast Asia's Islamic architectural historiography. This event was aimed at 200 audience members, not only representing various organisations, but also individuals who were interested in gaining in-depth information on Mosque Architecture, particularly in Melaka. Dr. Imran spoke on the many perspectives of the subject matter. The session not only covered the physical attributes of the mosques, it also gave insights into the historical backgrounds and how well related they are towards the expansion of the aesthetic values of mosques.



CONSERVATION: CRAFT OR SCIENCE?

Date : 24 June – 31 October, 2019

Venue : Special Gallery & Education Workshop, IAMM



In conjunction with its 15th anniversary, the Conservation Centre has lined up a series of programmes to give ample exposure to the public on what conservation is all about. The programmes, specifically tailored for non-professionals, are divided into a series of four workshops. Each is attended to by the museum's professional and trained conservators.

1) The Microscope Lab by Analytical Unit (12 September 2019)

Explore the fascinating materials found on artefacts and discover the amazing world of microscopy.

2) Traditional Paint Making: Theory & Practice by Painting Unit (18 September 2019)

An introduction to some of the most common materials used and methods employed in traditional European paint making.

3) Four Flap Enclosure and Encapsulation by Paper Unit (2 October 2019)

Learn the techniques to protect objects from dust, prolonged light exposure, wear and tear, and water damage.

4) Caring for Your Textiles by Textile Unit (23 October 2019)

The sharing of simple, systematic and effective ways to care for your textiles.

THE STORY OF COFFEE EXHIBITION



Date: 10 June – 15 October 2019

Venue: Education Wet Workshop & Children's Library

To celebrate the goodness of coffee, IAMM is proudly hosting an exhibition that showcases coffee and the versatility it has to offer. This event sees a series of exciting workshops that incorporate coffee as the star ingredient.

1. Coffee Painting Workshop (17 August 2019)

Create a masterpiece using instant ground coffee as the medium

2. Coffee Soap-making Workshop (21 September 2019)

Experience a soap bar made out of ground coffee and other natural ingredients under the guidance of Taheera Rosheena, a homemade soap enthusiast

3. Mud-like Coffee Playdough (28 September 2019)

Get pleasantly 'messy' making DIY playdough using flour, oil and ground coffee

SPECIAL VISIT FROM ALICIA'S F. ART STUDIO

Date: 15 August 2019

Venue: Museum Galleries & Education Wet Workshop

The museum is delighted to have received a group of talented individuals consisting of art students aged as young as five years old as well as adults. The visit started off with a gallery tour in which they were given exposure and information on the artefacts and history that uphold their glory. The activity right after took them to the Education Wet Workshop where they each get to experience making their very own Mamluk art.



4. Curator's Sharing Session & Coffee Tasting Demonstration (1 October 2019)

In conjunction with the International Coffee Day, the sharing session will highlight the ritualistic coffee culture in Islamic societies and its hidden meanings and symbolism. The talk will be followed by a Coffee Tasting Demonstration by our in-house barista

5. Beauty Café (5 October 2019)

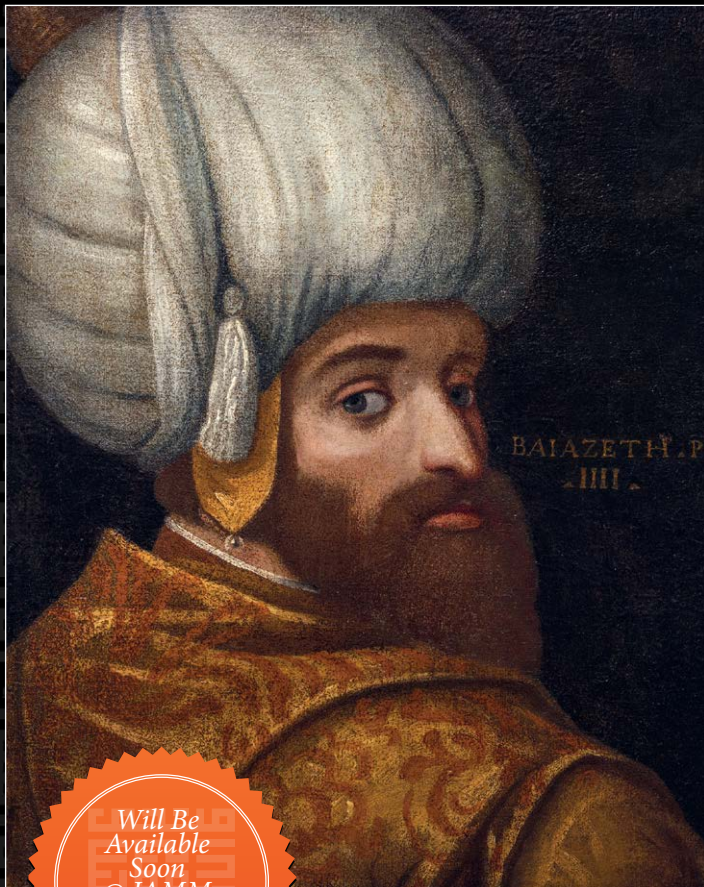
A session to be spent making DIY beauty products with the use of coffee

6. Dyeing with Coffee – Tie Dye art (20 October 2019)

Make amazing designs on fabric using coffee as the dyeing medium



INSPIRED BY THE EAST: HOW THE ISLAMIC WORLD INFLUENCED WESTERN ART



Will Be
Available
Soon
@ IAMM
MUSEUM
SHOP

A broad view of the West's complex relationship with the Middle East and North Africa, told through a selection of exquisite art objects.

The West has long had a fascination with the art and culture of the 'Orient'. Covering a period from the late fifteenth century to the present day Inspired by the East sheds light on the complex cultural exchange between these civilisations, which has generated a profusion of beautiful objects, perhaps most famously the Orientalist paintings and decorative arts of the nineteenth century.

Published to accompany a major exhibition at the British Museum in London and the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia in Kuala Lumpur, this richly illustrated book offers a new perspective on what the Islamic world has meant to Western artists, designers and thinkers. At the same time, instances of East looking West are explored, as artists in the Middle East and North Africa used adapted Orientalism for their own purposes.

This fresh approach includes works of art by well-known Orientalist painters such as Eugene Delacroix, John Frederick Lewis and Ludwig Deutsch, as well as a wide range of decorative art, photography, books and ephemera. A collection of essays approaches the subject from a variety of viewpoints, investigating questions of authenticity, exoticism, intercultural connections and globalisation over five centuries.

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