

# art and architecture of islam

Art and Architecture of Islam: A Journey Through Beauty and Spirituality

**art and architecture of islam** has long fascinated historians, artists, and travelers alike. This rich cultural heritage represents not just religious devotion but also an incredible fusion of artistic innovation and architectural ingenuity. From the intricate geometric patterns to the soaring minarets and grand domes, Islamic art and architecture tell stories of faith, power, and cultural exchange that have shaped civilizations across continents.

## The Foundations of Islamic Art and Architecture

Islamic art and architecture emerged during the 7th century with the rise of Islam in the Arabian Peninsula. Unlike many other artistic traditions, Islamic art places a strong emphasis on aniconism—the avoidance of depicting sentient beings—due to religious beliefs. This principle profoundly influenced the aesthetics of Islamic creations, leading artists and architects to explore alternative forms of expression.

## Core Principles and Religious Influence

Islamic art is deeply intertwined with spirituality. The Quran's guidance against idolatry encouraged the development of non-figurative decoration. Instead, Islamic artists focused on calligraphy, arabesques, and geometric patterns that symbolized infinity and the divine. This spiritual underpinning lends Islamic art a meditative quality, inviting viewers to reflect on the unity and complexity of creation.

## Key Elements in Islamic Artistic Expression

- **Calligraphy:** The art of beautiful writing, especially of Quranic verses, serves both a decorative and communicative purpose.
- **Geometric Patterns:** Repeated motifs and tessellations create mesmerizing visuals representing order and harmony.
- **Arabesques:** Stylized organic designs often featuring intertwining vines and floral motifs, symbolizing the eternal nature of God.
- **Muqarnas:** A form of ornamental vaulting that resembles honeycomb structures, often used in domes and entrances.

## Iconic Architectural Marvels in Islamic Culture

The architecture of Islam is as diverse as the regions it spans, from North Africa and the Middle East to South Asia and Spain. However, there are common features that define Islamic architecture and

make it instantly recognizable.

## Mosques: The Heart of Islamic Architecture

Mosques serve as places of worship and community gathering, embodying both spiritual and social functions. Their design reflects principles of symmetry, balance, and light manipulation.

- **Minarets:** Tall towers used for the call to prayer, symbolizing the presence of Islam in a city.
- **Domes:** Often positioned above the prayer hall, domes symbolize the vault of heaven and create spacious interiors.
- **Mihrab:** A niche indicating the direction of Mecca, guiding worshippers during prayer.
- **Courtyards:** Open spaces within mosque complexes providing natural ventilation and areas for congregation.

Famous mosques like the Al-Masjid al-Haram in Mecca, the Great Mosque of Córdoba in Spain, and the Sultan Ahmed Mosque (Blue Mosque) in Istanbul showcase the grandeur and diversity of Islamic mosque architecture.

## Palaces and Fortresses: Power and Prestige in Stone

Islamic rulers expressed their authority and cultural sophistication through grand palaces and fortresses. These structures often combined defensive features with exquisite artistic details.

- The **Alhambra** in Granada, Spain, is a prime example where architecture and nature blend seamlessly, adorned with intricate tile work and stucco carvings.
- The **Topkapi Palace** in Istanbul demonstrates a blend of Ottoman architectural styles with lavish interior decoration.

## Urban Planning and Public Buildings

Beyond religious and royal buildings, Islamic architecture also includes markets (bazaars), madrasas (educational institutions), caravanserais (roadside inns), and hammams (public baths). These structures highlight the importance of community life and trade in Islamic societies.

## Art Forms Within Islamic Architecture

Islamic architecture is not just about structural design; it is a canvas for various art forms that enhance its beauty and symbolism.

### Tilework and Mosaic

One of the most striking features in Islamic buildings is the use of colorful tiles arranged in complex patterns. The craftsmanship involved in zellij (Moroccan mosaic tilework) or Persian tilework showcases vibrant blues, greens, and golds that catch the eye and create a visual rhythm.

## **Calligraphy as Architectural Decoration**

Calligraphy in Islamic architecture goes beyond mere lettering; it becomes a decorative element that adorns walls, domes, and arches. The flowing script of Kufic, Naskh, and Thuluth styles transform sacred texts into visual art, reinforcing the spiritual atmosphere.

## **Stucco and Carvings**

Delicate plasterwork and stone carvings cover surfaces with arabesques and floral motifs. These intricate designs demonstrate the artisans' skill and create tactile surfaces that play with light and shadow.

## **Regional Variations and Influences in Islamic Art and Architecture**

Islamic art and architecture are not monolithic; they reflect the diverse cultures and environments where Islam spread.

### **Middle Eastern Styles**

The Middle East, as the birthplace of Islam, has some of the earliest examples of Islamic art. Abbasid architecture introduced innovations like ribbed domes and extensive use of calligraphy, while later Ottoman architecture introduced monumental domes and slender minarets.

### **Persian and Central Asian Contributions**

Persian art influenced Islamic architecture with its love for elaborate tilework and gardens, exemplified by the mosques of Isfahan. Central Asian Islamic architecture, such as the Registan in Samarkand, features grand madrasas with towering pishtaq (arched portals).

### **South Asian Interpretations**

In India, Islamic architecture incorporated local traditions, leading to unique styles like the Mughal architecture seen in the Taj Mahal. This style blends Persian, Indian, and Islamic elements, producing ornate marble inlays and expansive gardens.

## **North African and Andalusian Styles**

The Moorish style in Spain and North Africa is characterized by horseshoe arches, intricate stucco work, and vibrant tile patterns. The Great Mosque of Kairouan in Tunisia and the Alhambra are notable examples.

## **The Enduring Legacy of Islamic Art and Architecture**

The influence of Islamic art and architecture extends far beyond historical monuments. Contemporary architects and artists continue to draw inspiration from Islamic motifs, integrating traditional elements into modern designs. Whether in the form of abstract geometric patterns on textiles or the revival of courtyard concepts in urban planning, the legacy of Islamic aesthetics remains vibrant and relevant.

For travelers and enthusiasts, exploring Islamic art and architecture offers a window into a civilization that values harmony, beauty, and spirituality. Understanding the cultural and religious contexts behind these creations enriches the experience and appreciation of these timeless works.

The art and architecture of Islam invite us to see beyond the surface, to explore a world where faith and artistry unite in breathtaking harmony.

## **Frequently Asked Questions**

### **What are the key characteristics of Islamic art?**

Islamic art is characterized by intricate geometric patterns, arabesques, calligraphy, and aniconism, avoiding the depiction of human and animal forms in religious contexts.

### **How does Islamic architecture reflect religious beliefs?**

Islamic architecture incorporates features such as mosques with minarets, domes, and mihrabs that face Mecca, reflecting the spiritual focus and communal aspects of Islam.

### **What is the significance of calligraphy in Islamic art?**

Calligraphy is highly esteemed in Islamic art as the primary means of artistic expression, often used to transcribe Quranic verses, emphasizing the sacredness of the written word.

### **What are common motifs used in Islamic decorative arts?**

Common motifs include geometric shapes, floral patterns (arabesques), and intricate tile work, symbolizing infinity and the unity of creation.

## How did Islamic architecture influence other cultures?

Islamic architecture influenced cultures through the spread of elements like arches, domes, courtyards, and ornamental tile work, impacting European, Indian, and North African architectural styles.

## What role do mosques play in Islamic architecture?

Mosques serve as places of worship and community gathering, often designed with features like prayer halls, minarets, domes, and courtyards to accommodate religious practices.

## What is the importance of geometric design in Islamic art?

Geometric designs represent order and harmony in the universe, reflecting the Islamic view of creation and the infinite nature of Allah.

## How is the concept of aniconism reflected in Islamic art?

Aniconism leads to the avoidance of depicting sentient beings in religious art, promoting abstract, geometric, and calligraphic decoration instead.

## What are some famous examples of Islamic architecture?

Famous examples include the Alhambra in Spain, the Blue Mosque in Istanbul, the Great Mosque of Córdoba, and the Taj Mahal in India.

## How did materials and techniques influence Islamic architectural styles?

Islamic architecture utilized locally available materials like stone, brick, and tile, along with techniques such as muqarnas (stalactite vaulting) and intricate tile mosaics to create elaborate and durable structures.

## Additional Resources

Art and Architecture of Islam: A Timeless Synthesis of Faith and Aesthetics

**art and architecture of islam** represent a rich tapestry of cultural, religious, and artistic traditions that have evolved over more than a millennium. Rooted deeply in Islamic theology and cultural values, this creative expression transcends mere decoration to embody a spiritual ideology, simultaneously reflecting the diversity and unity of the Muslim world. Exploring this domain reveals a profound dialogue between form, function, and faith, shaped by historical contexts and regional influences.

# Exploring the Foundations of Islamic Art and Architecture

Islamic art and architecture are inseparably intertwined with the religious and social fabric of Islamic civilization. At their core, these art forms avoid figural representation in religious contexts, emphasizing instead abstract, geometric patterns, calligraphy, and vegetal motifs. This approach stems from aniconism in Islamic doctrine, which discourages the depiction of sentient beings to prevent idolatry.

The architectural achievements within the Islamic world are no less remarkable. They serve not only as places of worship but also as centers of learning, governance, and social interaction. The mosques, madrasas, palaces, and mausoleums constructed across various Islamic empires demonstrate a unique synthesis of artistic innovation and functional design.

## The Role of Calligraphy in Islamic Art

One of the most distinctive features of Islamic art is calligraphy, which elevates the written word of the Qur'an into a visual art form. Arabic script, with its flowing curves and rhythmic strokes, became the primary medium for decoration in religious and secular contexts alike. Calligraphy appears on walls, ceramics, textiles, and manuscripts, embodying both linguistic beauty and spiritual reverence.

This emphasis on calligraphy highlights Islam's deep respect for the Qur'an as the literal word of God. Consequently, calligraphic inscriptions often include Qur'anic verses, prayers, and aphorisms, imbuing spaces with a sacred aura. The variety of scripts—from Kufic to Naskh and Thuluth—demonstrates regional adaptations and historical developments within Islamic art.

## Architectural Innovations and Iconic Structures

Islamic architecture is renowned for its innovative use of space, light, and ornamentation. Key architectural elements such as the pointed arch, muqarnas (stalactite vaulting), intricate tilework, and large domes have become synonymous with the Islamic aesthetic. These features not only enhance the structural integrity of buildings but also create an immersive spiritual atmosphere.

Notable examples include the Great Mosque of Córdoba in Spain, which showcases a forest of double-tiered arches and an interplay of light and shadow, and the Taj Mahal in India, a masterpiece of symmetry and marble inlay symbolizing eternal love. Such monuments illustrate the geographical spread and adaptation of Islamic architectural principles.

## Regional Variations and Historical Development

Islamic art and architecture are not monolithic; they reflect a broad spectrum of cultural influences shaped by geography, politics, and local traditions. From the Umayyad in the Levant to the Ottoman in Anatolia and the Mughal in South Asia, each era and region contributed distinct styles and

techniques.

## **Middle Eastern and North African Traditions**

In the Middle East and North Africa, early Islamic architecture absorbed elements from Byzantine and Persian styles. The Umayyad Mosque of Damascus, one of the oldest surviving mosques, integrates Roman columns and mosaics with Islamic artistic motifs. The use of extensive tilework, such as in the Alhambra of Granada, Spain, exemplifies the Andalusian Islamic aesthetic that blends intricate geometric designs with lush vegetal patterns.

## **Ottoman Influence**

The Ottoman Empire introduced a synthesis of Byzantine and Islamic architectural elements, exemplified by the works of architect Mimar Sinan. Structures like the Süleymaniye Mosque in Istanbul feature soaring domes, slender minarets, and spacious courtyards, promoting both grandeur and functionality. The Ottomans also advanced decorative arts, including Iznik ceramics famed for their vibrant colors and detailed patterns.

## **Mughal Synthesis in South Asia**

South Asia's Islamic architecture, particularly under the Mughal dynasty, combined Persian, Indian, and Islamic styles. The Taj Mahal stands as a quintessential example, integrating Persian-style gardens with Indian craftsmanship and Islamic calligraphy. The use of white marble, pietra dura inlay, and symmetrical layouts reflect a sophisticated aesthetic that emphasizes balance and spirituality.

## **Artistic Characteristics and Symbolism**

Islamic art and architecture employ a set of recurring themes and motifs that convey both aesthetic appeal and symbolic meaning. The frequent use of geometric patterns represents the infinite nature of Allah, emphasizing order and unity. Arabesques—stylized, flowing plant motifs—express the interconnectedness of life and creation.

Furthermore, the avoidance of human and animal imagery in religious art redirects focus toward spirituality and divine presence. This abstraction allows for a meditative experience, encouraging viewers to contemplate the transcendent rather than the corporeal.

## **Materials and Techniques**

The choice of materials and craftsmanship techniques further distinguishes Islamic art. Common materials include ceramics, glass, wood, stone, and metal, often enhanced with intricate inlay or gilding. Techniques such as mosaic tilework, stucco carving, and wood latticework demonstrate

remarkable skill and attention to detail.

The use of light within Islamic architecture is also strategic—windows, screens, and reflective surfaces are designed to create dynamic illumination, enhancing the spiritual ambiance inside sacred spaces.

## The Impact and Legacy of Islamic Art and Architecture

The influence of Islamic art and architecture extends far beyond the Muslim world. Its principles and aesthetics have inspired artists, architects, and designers globally, contributing to the broader narrative of world art history.

Modern architecture and design often draw on Islamic geometric patterns and spatial concepts, showcasing their timeless relevance. Moreover, the preservation and restoration of Islamic heritage sites continue to attract scholarly interest and tourism, highlighting their cultural and economic importance.

As contemporary societies grapple with issues of identity and heritage, the art and architecture of Islam remain potent symbols of cultural pride and continuity. They serve as reminders of a civilization that valued beauty, knowledge, and spirituality in equal measure.

In the interplay between sacred meaning and artistic expression, the art and architecture of Islam articulate a unique worldview—one that celebrates the infinite, the transcendent, and the unifying power of faith through enduring and inspiring forms.

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artistic production and discusses objects in a wide range of media, including textiles, ceramics, metal, and wood. The book incorporates extensive accounts of the cultural contexts of the arts and defines the originality of each period. A final chapter explores the impact of Islamic art on the creativity of non-Muslims within the Islamic realm and in areas surrounding the Muslim world.

**art and architecture of islam:** *Islamic Art and Architecture* Peter Osier, 2017-07-15 The Islamic world has a rich artistic tradition, with particular strengths in calligraphy, illuminated manuscripts, architecture, and the decorative arts. This reference traces the development of Islamic art and architecture from the Umayyad dynasty to the present day. Readers will learn about the art of the Fatimids, Seljuqs, Mamluks, Mongols, Ottomans, Safavids, Mughals, and more. Eye-catching photos of gorgeous mosques, delicate manuscript paintings, and colorful ceramics give readers glimpses of the works being discussed. A great resource both for those interested in art history and those hoping to learn more about the long, rich history of Islamic culture.

**art and architecture of islam: A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture** Finbarr Barry Flood, Gulru Necipoglu, 2017-06-16 The two-volume Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture bridges the gap between monograph and survey text by providing a new level of access and interpretation to Islamic art. The more than 50 newly commissioned essays revisit canonical topics, and include original approaches and scholarship on neglected aspects of the field. This two-volume Companion showcases more than 50 specially commissioned essays and an introduction that survey Islamic art and architecture in all its traditional grandeur. Essays are organized according to a new chronological-geographical paradigm that remaps the unprecedented expansion of the field and reflects the nuances of major artistic and political developments during the 1400-year span. The Companion represents recent developments in the field, and encourages future horizons by commissioning innovative essays that provide fresh perspectives on canonical subjects, such as early Islamic art, sacred spaces, palaces, urbanism, ornament, arts of the book, and the portable arts while introducing others that have been previously neglected, including unexplored geographies and periods, transregional connectivities, talismans and magic, consumption and networks of portability, museums and collecting, and contemporary art worlds; the essays entail strong comparative and historiographic dimensions. The volumes are accompanied by a map, and each subsection is preceded by a brief outline of the main cultural and historical developments during the period in question. The volumes include periods and regions typically excluded from survey books including modern and contemporary art-architecture; China, Indonesia, Sub-Saharan Africa, Sicily, the New World (Americas).

**art and architecture of islam:** *The Art and Architecture of Islam 1250-1800* Sheila S. Blair, Jonathan M. Bloom, 1996-09-25 They discuss, for example, how the universal caliphs of the first six centuries gave way to regional rulers and how, in this new world order, Iranian forms, techniques, and motifs played a dominant role in the artistic life of most of the Muslim world; the one exception was the Maghrib, an area protected from the full brunt of the Mongol invasions, where traditional models continued to inspire artists and patrons. By the sixteenth century, say the authors, the eastern Mediterranean under the Ottomans and the area of northern India under the Mughals had become more powerful, and the Iranian models of early Ottoman and Mughal art gradually gave way to distinct regional and imperial styles.

**art and architecture of islam:** *Islamic Art and Architecture* Robert Hillenbrand, 1999-01-01 A guide to the architecture, calligraphy, ceramics, and other arts of Islam covers a thousand years of history and an area stretching from the Atlantic to the borders of India and China.

**art and architecture of islam: The Islamic Art and Architecture** Sir Thomas Walker Arnold, 2001

**art and architecture of islam: A Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture, 2 Volume Set** Finbarr Barry Flood, Gulru Necipoglu, 2017-09-13 The two-volume Companion to Islamic Art and Architecture bridges the gap between monograph and survey text by providing a new level of access and interpretation to Islamic art. The more than 50 newly commissioned essays revisit canonical topics, and include original approaches and scholarship on neglected aspects of the field. This

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**art and architecture of islam: Muqarnas** Oleg Grabar, 1990-03

**art and architecture of islam: The Art and Architecture of Islam, 650-1250** Richard Ettinghausen, Oleg Grabar, 1994. Surveys the significant artistic and architectural works of Islamic countries from the seventh through the thirteenth centuries.

**art and architecture of islam: Essays in Islamic Art and Architecture** Abbas Daneshvari, 1981-01-01

**art and architecture of islam: Art and Architecture in the Islamic Tradition** Mohammed Hamdouni Alami, 2013-12-20. What is 'art' in the sense of the Islamic tradition? Mohammed Hamdouni Alami argues that Islamic art has historically been excluded from Western notions of art; that the Western aesthetic tradition's preoccupation with the human body, and the ban on the representation of the human body in Islam, has meant that Islamic and Western art have been perceived as inherently at odds. However, the move away from this 'anthropomorphic aesthetic' in Western art movements, such as modern abstract and constructivist painting, have presented the opportunity for new ways of viewing and evaluating Islamic art and architecture. This book questions the very idea of art predicated on the anthropocentric bias of classical art, and the corollary 'exclusion' of Islamic art from the status of art. It addresses a central question in post-classical aesthetic theory, in as much as the advent of modern abstract and constructivist painting have shown that art can be other than the representation of the human body; that art is not neutral aesthetic contemplation but it is fraught with power and violence; and that the presupposition of classical art was not a universal truth but the assumption of a specific cultural and historical set of practices and vocabularies. Based on close readings of classical Islamic literature, philosophy, poetry, medicine and theology, along with contemporary Western art theory, the author uncovers a specific Islamic theoretical vision of art and architecture based on poetic practice, politics, cosmology and desire. In particular it traces the effects of decoration and architectural planning on the human soul as well as the centrality of the gaze in this poetic view - in Arabic 'nazar' - while examining its surprising similarity to modern theories of the gaze. Through this double gesture, moving critically between two traditions, the author brings Islamic thought and aesthetics back into the realm of visibility, addressing the lack of recognition in comparison with other historical periods and traditions. This is an important step toward a critical analysis of the contemporary debate around the revival of Islamic architectural identity - a debate intricately embedded within opposing Islamic political and social projects throughout the world.

**art and architecture of islam: Beauty and Islam** Valerie Gonzalez, 2001-08-24. 'Beauty and Islam' explores aspects of aesthetics in classical Islamic thought in the light of contemporary theories, offering new perspectives on Islamic art and architecture with examples ranging from the Qur'an and the Alhambra to the works of present day artists and philosophers. Tracing the roots of Islamic aesthetics back to the works of the great philosophers of the Middle Ages such as Avicenna

and Averroes, Valerie Gonzalez finds that aesthetic theory in Islam must be seen within the much wider context of parallel thinking on theology, ethics, physics and metaphysics.

**art and architecture of islam:** *Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art & Architecture: Three-Volume Set* Jonathan Bloom, Sheila Blair, 2009-05-14 The Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture deals with all aspects of Islamic art and architecture ranging from the Middle East to Central Asia to Southeast Asia and Africa. The volumes cover all subject areas in Islamic art including: artists, rulers, writers, architecture, ceramics, sculpture, metalwork, painting, calligraphy, textiles, and more. The Grove Encyclopedia of Islamic Art and Architecture provides unparalleled scope and depth on this rapidly growing area of interest. It offers fully updated articles and bibliography as well as more than 500 plans, maps, diagrams, illustrations and colour plates. Similar in scope and design to The Grove Encyclopedia of Decorative Arts, this three-volume reference work contains articles of various lengths in alphabetical order. The shorter, more factual articles (none shorter than 50 words) are combined with larger, multi-section articles tracing the development of the art forms in various geographical locations.

**art and architecture of islam: Inside/Outside Islamic Art and Architecture** Saygin Salgirli, 2021-07-29 When we walk into a gallery, we have a fairly good idea where the building begins and ends; and inside, while observing a painting, we are equally confident in distinguishing between the painting-proper and its frame and borders. Yet, things are often more complicated. A building defines an exterior space just as much as an interior, and what we perceive to be ornamental and marginal to a given painting may in fact be central to what it represents. In this volume, a simple question is presented: instead of dichotomous separations between inside and outside, or exterior and interior, what other relationships can we think of? The first book of its kind to grapple with this question, *Inside/Outside Islamic Art and Architecture* focuses on a wide spectrum of mediums and topics, including painted manuscripts, objects, architectural decoration, architecture and urban planning, and photography. Bringing together scholars with diverse methodologies—who work on a geographical span stretching from India to Spain and Nigeria, and across a temporal spectrum from the thirteenth to the twenty-first century—this original book also poses engaging questions about the boundaries of the field.

**art and architecture of islam:** *Islamic Art and Architecture 650-1250* Richard Ettinghausen, 1987

**art and architecture of islam:** *Islamic Art and Beyond* Oleg Grabar, 2006 The articles selected for *Islamic Art and Beyond*, the third in the set of four selections of articles by Oleg Grabar, illustrate how the author's study of Islamic art led him in two directions for a further understanding of the arts. One is how to define Islamic art and what impulses provided it with its own peculiar forms and dynamics of growth. The other issue is that of the meanings to be given to forms like domes, so characteristic of Islamic art, or to terms like symbol, signs, or aesthetic values in the arts, especially when one considers the contemporary world.

**art and architecture of islam: Islamic Art and Beyond** Oleg Grabar, 2024-08-01 *Islamic Art and Beyond* is the third in a set of four volumes of studies on Islamic art by Oleg Grabar. Between them they bring together more than eighty articles, studies and essays, work spanning half a century by a master of the field. Each volume takes a particular section of the topic, the three other volumes being entitled: *Early Islamic Art, 650-1100*; *Islamic Visual Culture, 1100-1800*; and *Jerusalem*. Reflecting the many incidents of a long academic life, they illustrate one scholar's attempt at making order and sense of 1400 years of artistic growth. They deal with architecture, painting, objects, iconography, theories of art, aesthetics and ornament, and they seek to integrate our knowledge of Islamic art with Islamic culture and history as well as with the global concerns of the History of Art. In addition to the articles selected, each volume contains an introduction which describes, often in highly personal ways, the context in which Grabar's scholarship developed and the people who directed and mentored his efforts. The articles in the present volume illustrate how the author's study of Islamic art led him in two directions for a further understanding of the arts. One is how to define Islamic art and what impulses provided it with its own peculiar forms and dynamics of

growth. Was it a faith or a combination of social, historical, and cultural events? And how has 'Islamic art' impacted on the contemporary arts of the Islamic world? The other issue is that of the meanings to be given to forms like domes, so characteristic of Islamic art, or to terms like symbol, signs, or aesthetic values in the arts, especially when one considers the contemporary world. The Islamic examples allow for the development of new intellectual positions for the history and criticism of the arts everywhere.

**art and architecture of islam:** *Arts of the City Victorious* Jonathan M. Bloom, 2007 Fatimid art and architecture has always been somewhat anomalous in the history of islamic art because of the direction it grew (west to east), subject matter (figural at a time when geometry and the arabesque were developing elsewhere), and unusually rich and precise documentation in royal and popular accounts. Whereas earlier studies treated the two and a half centuries of Fatimid art and architecture as a single category, this book is the first to show how they grew and evolved over time.--BOOK JACKET.

**art and architecture of islam:** *The Formation of Islamic Art* Oleg Grabar, 1987-01-01 This classic work on the nature of early Islamic art has now been brought up to date in order to take into consideration material that has recently come to light. In a new chapter, Oleg Grabar develops alternate models for the formation of Islamic art, tightens its chronology, and discusses its implications for the contemporary art of the Muslim world. Reviews of the first edition: Grabar examines the possible ramifications of sociological, economic, historical, psychological, ecological, and archaeological influences upon the art of Islam. . . [He] explains that Islamic art is woven from the threads of an Eastern, Oriental tradition and the hardy, surviving strands of Classical style, and [he] illustrates this web by means of a variety of convincing and well-chosen examples.--Art Bulletin A book of absorbing interest and immense erudition. . . All Islamic archaeologists and scholars will thank Professor Grabar for a profound and original study of an immense and complex field, which may provoke controversy but must impress by its mastery and charm by its modesty.--Times Literary Supplement Oleg Grabar, in this book of exceptional subtlety and taste, surveys and extends his own important contributions to the study of early Islamic art history and works out an original and imaginative approach to the elusive and complex problems of understanding Islamic art.--American Historical Review

**art and architecture of islam:** *Hassan Fathy and Continuity in Islamic Architecture* Ahmad Hamid, 2010 A thought-provoking and richly illustrated look at tradition and innovation in the work of the world-renowned architect

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