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ISLAMIC ARTS
MUSEUM MALAYSIA

Newsletter

Issue

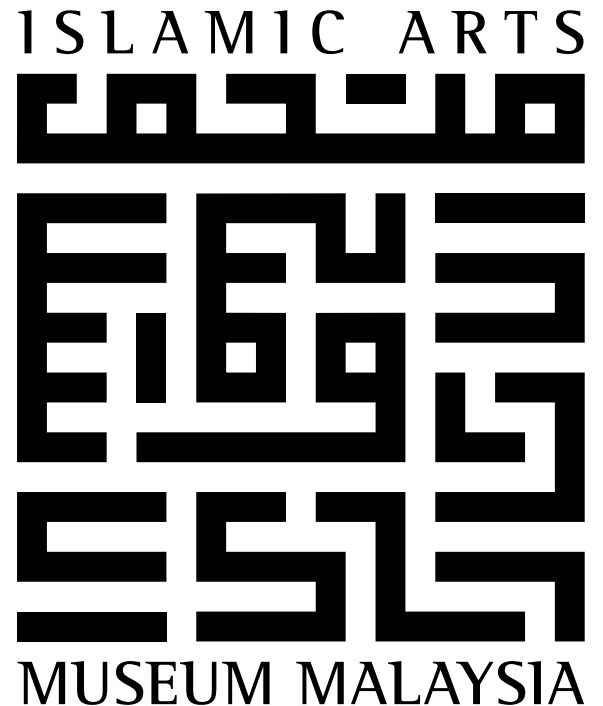
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January - March 2024



The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM) recently launched two simultaneous exhibitions — ‘A Journey through Islamic Art’ and ‘Alif Lam Ra: Contemporary Muslim Calligraphy’ — to mark the museum’s 25th anniversary.

The launch of the double exhibition on 12 December 2023 was officiated by the Malaysian Prime Minister, Datuk Seri Anwar Ibrahim, at the Inverted Dome of the museum. Dignitaries from the diplomatic corps, friends of the

museum, members of the media and other distinguished guests also gathered to celebrate this momentous occasion in a rare evening launch at the museum.

Director Message

Hours after the very successful 25th anniversary celebration of the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM), and the nourishing panel discussion and talks from the experts, it became clear that the phase two of the journey of the museum has started. And at this landmark stage, IAMM will move even more diligently to impact more our audience, engage with new visitors, and expand our collection.

In the past phase, we navigated through challenges such as the pandemic that changed our perception of museums yet left us stronger and more determined to bring to Malaysia new exciting exhibition and collaboration.

Our focus for the new phase, and new season is to give the opportunity for new stories to be told through art, give a voice to collections that were for long merely objects of art on display. To invite our audience, together, to celebrate diversity and exclusivity. To make this world a better one for the younger generations.

With this message, I wish you all a blessed and prosperous year ahead. Happy New Year.

Syed Mohamad Albukhary
Director
Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia

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Launching of the 25th anniversary of the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia

The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia celebrated its silver jubilee with the launch of two major exhibitions; “A Journey through Islamic Art” and “Alif Lam Ra: Contemporary Muslim Calligraphy” from 13 December 2023 to 30 June 2023. The launching ceremony was officiated by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Yang Amat Berhormat Dato’ Seri Anwar bin Ibrahim.

The two exhibitions, held in Special Galleries 1 and 2 highlight an exceptional breadth of designs and craftsmanship of the Islamic world, making it a feast for the eyes and for inquiring minds.

‘A Journey through Islamic Art’ presents the progress of IAMM’s development, featuring nearly every type of artefact from its collection. These include masterpieces from the permanent galleries as well as the most recent acquisitions, which have never been displayed before in any of the permanent galleries.

Within this exhibition there are five categories: ‘In the Name of Allah’, ‘God Is Beautiful and He Loves Beauty’, ‘Let the Scribe



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Write', 'Victory from Allah' and 'Seek Knowledge'. This division showcases the diversity of objects needed to narrate the heritage of interconnected regions of the world across geography and time.

From the artefacts displayed, visitors are able to get up close and enter the world of master craftsmen, elite ateliers, royal patronage, and the artists that carried Islamic art to such

great heights. Complementing 'A Journey' is the 'Alif Lam Ra' exhibition, which highlights the continuity of Islamic art as a living successor to traditional forms. A wide-ranging display of works by contemporary Muslim calligraphers invites visitors to witness the evolution of calligraphy as the supreme medium of expression within Islam. With more than 42 artists from Japan to Jordan and from Iran to Malaysia, 'Alif Lam Ra'

traces the most recent steps on the journey that started with early calligraphers' devotion to the revealed word of God. It has now culminated with contemporary innovations in ways of presenting words and letters as artistic expressions.

Since its inception, IAMM has strived to become an established centre of learning and research in order to preserve the history,

arts and cultural heritage of the Islamic world. The museum's exhibitions would be incomplete without its educational programmes. A variety of events such as panel talks, educational activities and calligraphy workshops are scheduled not only to celebrate IAMM's journey but to ensure the museum continues to be the preserver, custodian and educator of Islamic arts.

Complementing the exhibition and the 25th anniversary, IAMM has published two catalogues; 'A Journey through Islamic Art' and 'Alif Lam Ra: Contemporary Muslim Calligraphy'.

The 'Journey' catalogue features over 150 artefacts that have been selected to represent the extraordinary diversity of Islamic art over a quarter of a century — since the museum's opening in 1998. 'Alif Lam Ra',

on the other hand, presents some of the best contemporary works of calligraphy in the IAMM collection and also forms the second volume of IAMM's 'Contemporary Muslim Calligraphy' series of publications.

Experts' Talk and Panel Discussion

The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia celebrated its 25th anniversary in December with a number of activities, including hosting a series of workshops and an expert talk. On 13 December 2023, IAMM welcomed Dr Farouk Yahya (Research Associate at SOAS, University of London), William Robinson (Former Head of Research and Evaluation at Christie's) and Dr Amir Zerkgoon (Honorary Professor at the University of Tehran), who presented papers on 'Southeast Asia in the Study of Islamic Art', 'Qajar Paintings: Architectural Relationships' and 'What is Islamic about Islamic Art?' Soon after, a discussion on the future of Islamic-art museums

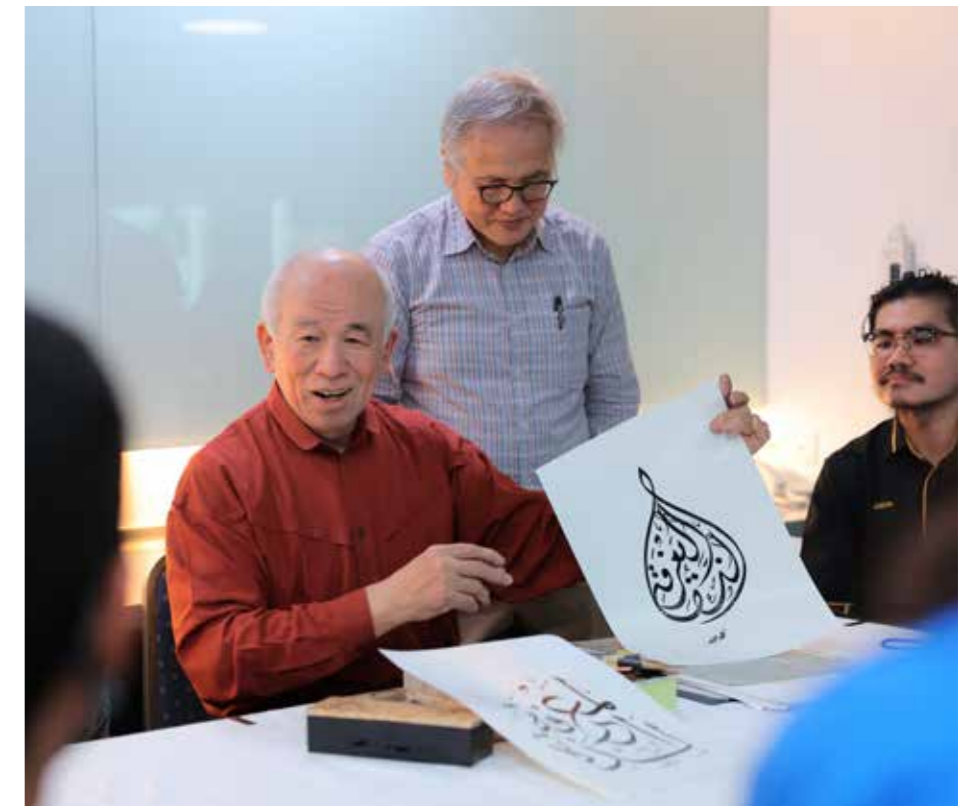


was held with a compelling line-up of panellists, which included H.E. Ary Norton de Murat Quintella (Ambassador of Brazil to Malaysia), Dr Silke Ackermann FSA (Director, History of Science Museum, University of Oxford), Dr Farouk Yahya and Professor Osman Bakar (Holder of Al-Ghazali Chair of Epistemology and Civilizational Studies at the International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization).



Demonstration of Arabic Calligraphy by Fuad Kouichi Honda

13 December 2023 - With worldwide recognition for his creativity and inspiration, Honda's paintings showcase a strong connection between the Qur'an and calligraphy, a prominent feature of Islamic art. This exclusive event offered a rare opportunity for calligraphy students and enthusiasts to witness the master at work. Participants were able to see a calligraphy demonstration by Honda, who also shared his thoughts on the philosophy and practice of calligraphy. Participants brought along their own artwork and received valuable advice from Mr Honda.



Reaching for the Stars: Exploring the Astrolabe

14 December 2023 - This was an interactive and thought-provoking workshop on the astrolabe, a highly sophisticated astronomical instrument that was widely used in the Islamic world for over 1,000 years. Led by Dr Silke Ackermann, this workshop helped to contextualise the meaning of Islamic science and focused on what unites rather than divides us across the world.

Dr Ackermann is the Director of the History of Science Museum at the University of Oxford (UK), following 16 years at the British Museum in a range of curatorial and managerial roles. Her main research interest is the transfer of knowledge between the Islamic world and Europe. 16 December 2023



Ahar Paper Making

16 December 2023 - Ahar paper, coated with starch, alum and egg whites, features a glossy surface preventing ink absorption. This allows calligraphers to easily make corrections, enhancing the beauty of intricate Islamic calligraphy with its unique texture and durability.

The workshop offered participants a first-hand experience in making Ahar paper with Puan Citi J. Yousoff, including demonstrations of materials and ingredients as participants actively engaged in preparing and applying this unique art.



Puan Citi J. Yousoff, who specialises in Islamic calligraphy under Hasan Celebi in Turkey, attained her Ijaza in Thuluth and Naskh scripts in 2012. She graduated from Wimbledon School of Art, holds an MA in Visual Islamic and Traditional Arts from the Prince's School of Traditional Arts, London. Her art blends Islamic calligraphy with traditional motifs, reflecting both her heritage and contemporary artistic background.

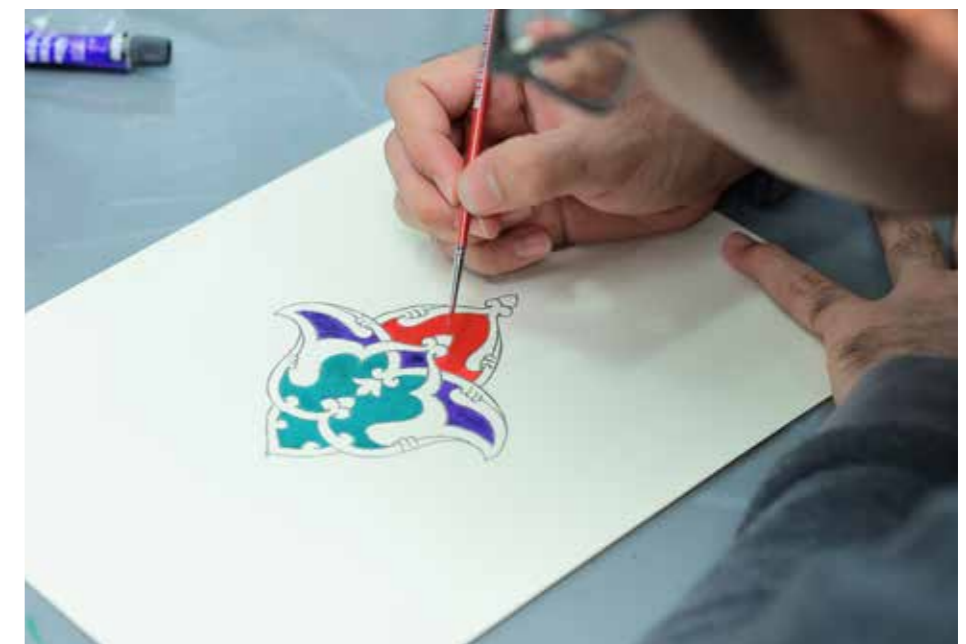


Introduction to Tezhib Art: Exploring Islamic Design

17 December 2023 - This workshop was designed as an immersive-experience Tezhib course. To understand the rich art of Tezhib, participants were guided to complete a simplified Tezhib project, gaining a feel for the art form, its challenges and its rewards within four hours. All necessary materials, including specialised Tezhib tools and paints, were provided for the participants. The outcome was full immersion in this art.

Maedah Hosseiny graduated from Azad University of Mashhad with a degree in mathematics. She worked as a maths teacher before picking up art and found a strong passion for it. Hosseiny

chose to focus further in the art of Tezhib because of her love for geometry. Over the years, Hosseiny has displayed her work at numerous art exhibitions in Malaysia and abroad.



Manifestasi Perdana Seni Khat 2023

On 11 November 2023, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia hosted the 7th edition of the Manifestasi Perdana Seni Khat, a national calligraphy competition in collaboration with Persatuan Seni Khat Kebangsaan (PSKK). This much-awaited competition had been delayed since 2020 due to the spread of Covid-19. With two main categories ('Spontaneous on Paper' – divided into three subcategories: Adults, Secondary and Primary

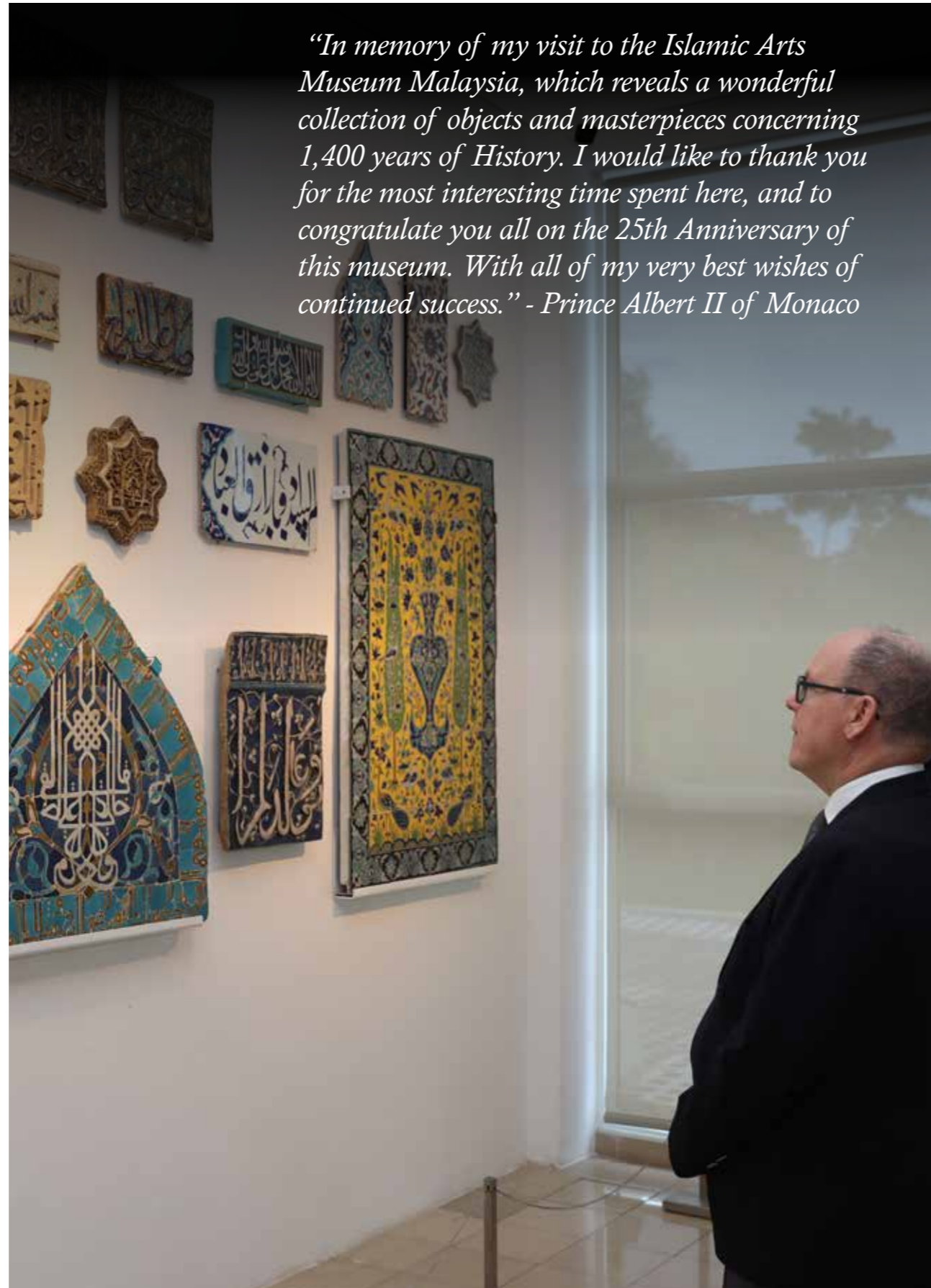


School – and 'Contemporary Calligraphy Painting on Canvas'), it began with a workshop by Ustaz Abdul Baki Abu Bakar, a renowned calligrapher, to help participants prepare for the competition. The prize-giving ceremony was held on the next day, 12 November, led by Dr Abdul Rahman, President of the PSKK. With over 100 participants taking part this year, IAMM, in cooperation with PSKK, remains hopeful to continue the event as a platform for aspiring calligraphers with the aim of preserving Islamic calligraphy whilst fostering deeper appreciation for this form of Islamic art and its essential legacy.



Visit by HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco

On 26 November 2023, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia received a visit from His Serene Highness Prince Albert II of Monaco and his entourage. His Serene Highness generously spent several hours in the museum and visited all 12 permanent galleries on the premises. Prince Albert also took some time to sign our guest book, with the message, *“In memory of my visit to the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, which reveals a wonderful collection of objects and masterpieces concerning 1,400 years of History. I would like to thank you for the most interesting time spent here, and to congratulate you all on the 25th Anniversary of this museum. With all of my very best wishes of continued success.”* We at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia are very honoured and thankful for His Serene Highness’s support shown to our institution.



“In memory of my visit to the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, which reveals a wonderful collection of objects and masterpieces concerning 1,400 years of History. I would like to thank you for the most interesting time spent here, and to congratulate you all on the 25th Anniversary of this museum. With all of my very best wishes of continued success.” - Prince Albert II of Monaco

Visit by the Prime Minister of the Netherlands

The Prime Minister of the Netherlands, Mark Rutte, visited the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia on 1 November 2023. The Prime Minister spent time to see our valuable Islamic art and manuscripts collection, including the oldest object in

the museum, a Qur’an leaf from the 7th – 9th centuries. The Prime Minister and his officials also had the opportunity to have a closer look at the collection of magnificent copies of the Qur’an produced in royal ateliers across the Islamic world. The special visit was followed with the guest-book signing session and a press conference.



Tadarus Al-Qu’ran 1445H at the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia

The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia is proud to once again announce the Al-Qu’ran Recitation Programme in conjunction with the holy month of Ramadhan 1445H. This will be the 17th year since it was first launched, in 2006. The programme consists of the recitation of all 30 chapters of the Qu’ran, and will be led by renowned imams from

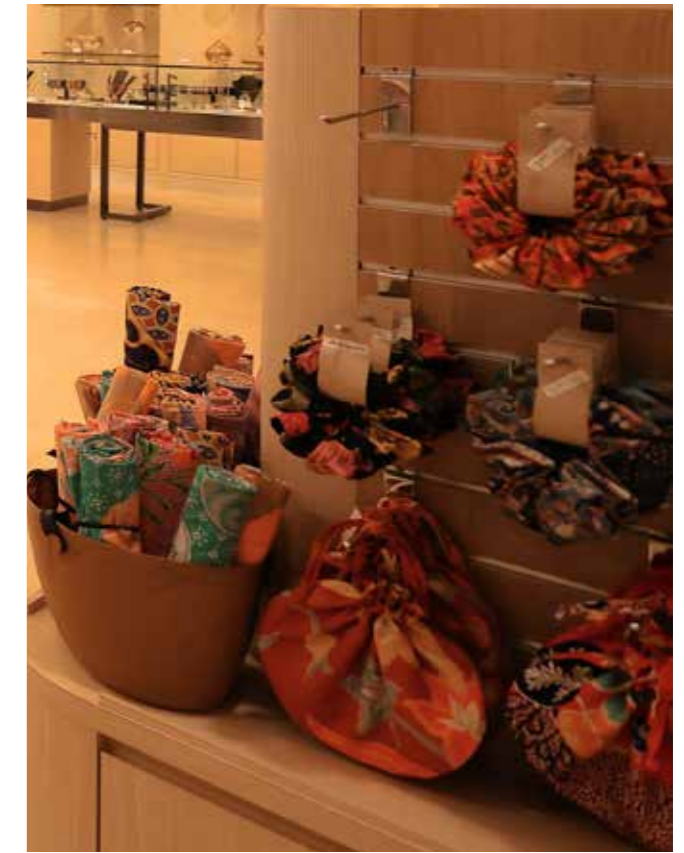
Kuala Lumpur and Selangor. It will be held daily from 10am-12pm, starting on 2 March and continuing until 30 March 2024. It is open to members of the public of all ages. This year we will continue offering two episodes on valuable artefacts related to the writing of the Qu’ran. Come and join us to celebrate this special month.

Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia Unveils Revamped Shop Experience with Global Access

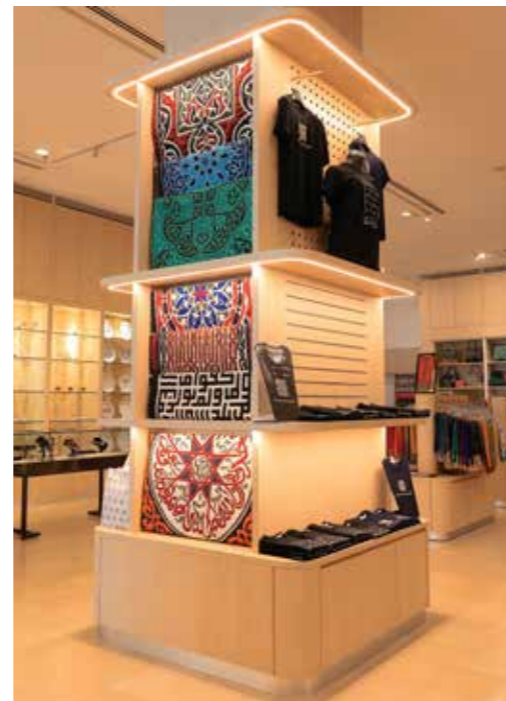
On 3 November 2023, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia unveiled the new and improved Museum Shop, offering visitors a redefined encounter at the intersection of tradition and contemporary aesthetics.

Situated on the museum's ground floor, the renovated space introduces patrons to an immersive journey through nuanced expressions of Islamic art. The curated selection features artefact replicas, textile goods and calligraphy decor items, each handpicked to reflect the diverse richness of the Islamic artistic heritage. From Islamic and art books to intricate ceramics, the collection serves as a testament to IAMM's commitment to showcasing the breadth of Islam's cultural tapestry.

Noteworthy is IAMM's foray into the digital space, with the Museum Shop now extending its reach online. This strategic move enables art enthusiasts worldwide to explore and acquire pieces from the comfort of their homes, fostering a global connection to the profound beauty and cultural significance of Islamic artistry.



Whether visitors choose to physically engage with the tactile offerings or navigate the online collection, IAMM beckons both local and international audiences to partake in this cultural panorama. The Museum Shop has evolved as a dynamic hub for artistic exploration, accessible within the museum's premises or through the click of a digital link.



OPENING HOURS

Monday – Sunday (except Eid ul-Fitri & Eid ul-Adha)
9:30 am – 6:00 pm
Last entry at 5:30 pm

ADMISSION FEE


Adult RM20.00
Others (Visitors below 18 years old, Students of Higher Learning
Institutions & Malaysian Senior Citizens) RM10.00
Children below 6 years old FREE

FREE ADMISSION


Museum Shop
Children's Library
MOZA Restaurant
Education Centre

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 Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia

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