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April- June 2026



“The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia (IAMM) is proud to mark the 18th edition of its Al-Qur’an Recitation Programme this year. Over time, this initiative has become a cherished tradition that brings members of the community together in a shared spirit of reflection and unity during the holy month of Ramadan. It reflects the museum’s enduring commitment to fostering a deeper appreciation of the Qur’an and its timeless teachings.”

Director's Message

First and foremost, I would like to extend my warmest wishes for Eid al-Fitr to our counterparts, visitors, subscribers and Muslim brothers and sisters around the world. The blessed month of Ramadan Kareem is now over; a time when Muslims everywhere seek patience and steadfastness in facing trials and challenges — embracing the true spirit of fasting — while continuing to nurture peace, compassion and harmony with one another.

As in previous years, our annual Tadarus (Qur'anic recitation) programme was successfully resumed in 2026, marking its 18th year. To commemorate this meaningful milestone, this issue highlights one of the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia's longest-running programmes—one that has become a cherished tradition. The Tadarus continues to receive strong support and participation not only from our regular attendees but also from many new participants. For this, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to everyone involved.

Later in the second quarter of the year, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia will proudly present one of our major exhibitions for 2026: *Tatreez: Reclaiming Palestine through Embroidery*. The exhibition will feature a remarkable display across two galleries, showcasing traditional Palestinian thobes. In addition, other objects — including jewellery, headdresses, and accessories — will be presented, offering insights into the richness of Palestinian culture and daily life.

It was during the blessed month of Ramadan that the holy scripture, the Qur'an, was first revealed to the Prophet Muhammad on the 17th night of Ramadan in 610. This significant occasion continues to be commemorated by Muslims around the world. The Qur'an is also one of the most important categories for visitors and the museum itself.

Decades ago, the very first collection to enter the museum was a complete set of thirty volumes of the Holy Book. Over the years, our collection has grown to include a wide variety of Qur'anic manuscripts. Some of the earliest examples date back to around the 8th century, with others produced by renowned calligraphers throughout the history of the Islamic world. These sacred works are displayed for visitors to appreciate the remarkable craftsmanship and artistic heritage of Islam's holiest scripture.

Thank you.

Syed Mohamad Albukhary
Director
Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia

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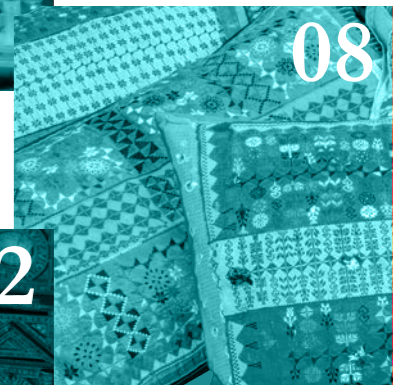
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Tadarus Al-Qur'an- Al- Qur'an Recitation Programme 1447H / 2026

By: Umi Amalin Zafirah Sakri



In conjunction with the holy month of Ramadan, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia organised its annual Tadarus Al-Qur'an for the year 1447H / 2026. The programme brought together almost 120 participants at the museum to recite and reflect upon the Qur'an for the whole month.

The session was led by seven distinguished imams and

ustaz from Kuala Lumpur, whose guidance and recitation contributed to the meaningful atmosphere of the programme. Their leadership encouraged participants to engage deeply with the Qur'an while fostering a sense of community during the holy month.

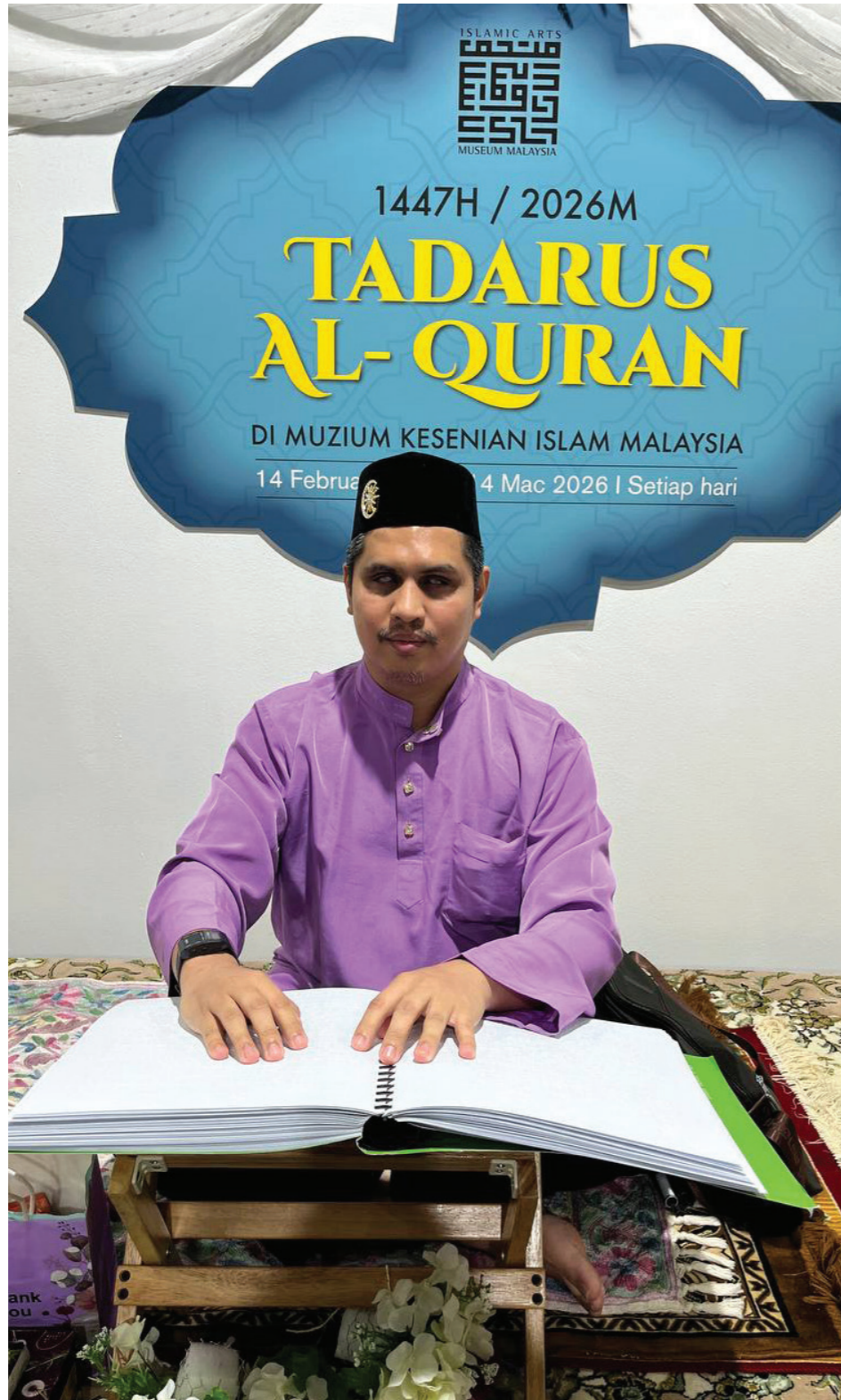
As part of the programme, a special sharing session was held on 26 February 2026



for the participants at the museum galleries. The session focused on the exhibition *Busana: Traditional Costumes of the Malay World* as they were introduced to the cultural and historical significance of traditional attire from across the Malay world, gaining insights into the artistry and heritage behind the garments displayed.

On 7 March, in conjunction with Nuzul Qur'an Day, we invited Ustaz Muhammad Firdaus from PERTIS, who is visually impaired, to lead the recitation for the day using the Braille Al-Qur'an. During this session, he showed us how he reads the Qur'an with this system. Seeing each fingertip tracing the raised dots reveals the incredible way tiny patterns can represent sacred texts, allowing the visually impaired to 'read' with their fingers just as others do with their eyes. It's a reminder of how ingenuity and inclusivity come together to open new doors to knowledge and understanding. It was a meaningful tactile experience for all present. From this, we learned that everyone has their own strengths, and the ease with which he was able to read the Qur'an using braille was truly inspiring. The Ustaz's dedication encouraged us to be more grateful for our abilities and motivated us to appreciate and read the Qur'an more in our daily lives.

Through programmes such as the Tadarus Al-Qur'an and educational sharing session, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia continues to foster both spiritual reflection and cultural appreciation among its visitors and participants.



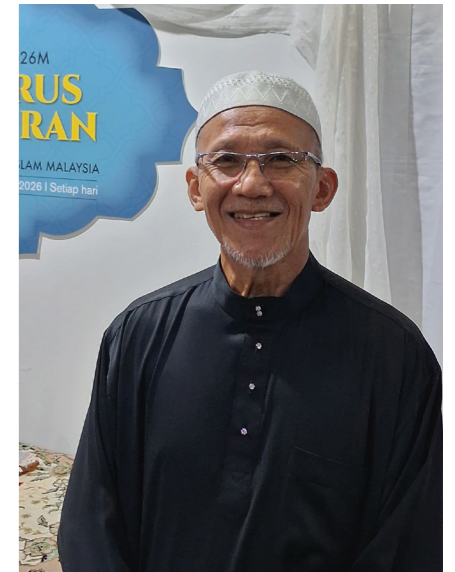
"Learning to read the Qur'an has not always been easy for me, but it has always been my dream to join a group where I could be guided in reciting it properly. Being part of this Tadarus programme is very touching for me because I feel accepted by the community here, and I look forward to joining it every year. As a mualaf from the Philippines, reciting the Qur'an together with others in this Tadarus programme makes it easier for me to improve my recitation and continue learning."

Hajah Nurain Abdullah



"Driving one and a half hours every day for a month is not a problem for me because the people here are so welcoming and the environment is wonderful. I always look forward to coming here for the Tadarus sessions. I joined this programme to continue my mother's legacy after she passed away. Reciting the Qur'an here reminds me of her and inspires me to keep the practice alive. There is so much to learn from the Qur'an, through tadabbur, we are able to reflect more deeply on the meaning of life and our existence, while also learning from knowledgeable ustaz."

Hajah Nor Azah binti Omar



"The honour of Ramadan lies in the revelation of the Qur'an. We are fortunate to be given the opportunity to recite it during this blessed month. Through programmes like this, we continue to improve our recitation and understanding through tadabbur. My wife and I are truly grateful to be part of this meaningful gathering."

Dato' Sri Abd. Rahman bin Hj Abd. Rahim

Tatreez:
Reclaiming Palestine through Embroidery
By: Sharifah Shahanaz Syed Mohamed Redzuan

Prior to the Nakba in 1948, Palestinian heritage was closely expressed through material culture, especially in clothing and craft traditions. The circulation of fabrics, threads and techniques across towns and villages shaped distinctive regional styles that reflected identity and daily life. Over time, exchanges with neighbouring regions and the wider world enriched these traditions, with outside influences absorbed into local practices rather than replacing them. This June, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia unveils an exhibition from its collection that explores these histories and speaks to a culture that remains deeply rooted and enduring.

Known to many as the ‘Holy Land’, Palestine is widely recognised as central to the three Abrahamic religions, with Jerusalem (Al-Quds) as its spiritual heart. Despite its religious importance, less is known about the daily lives, culture and artistic expressions of the people who lived in its towns, villages and farmlands, often expressed through their attire.



Woman traditional wedding attire
Bethlehem
20th century



Traditional headdress called
'araqiyeh
Bethlehem or Hebron
c. 1930–1940

Over the years, the Museum has gathered a significant collection of artefacts dating from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century. Each piece reflects generational heritage, ceremonies and celebrations during a period of cultural vitality, including several rare examples. This carefully curated collection has enabled IAMM to design an exhibition that tells the story of Palestine through its clothing and adornments.

Tatreez embroidery is a powerful visual language. This exhibition showcases an extensive collection that celebrates the uniqueness of each *thobe* (dress), highlighting regional motifs and the

shared influences between neighbouring areas. Visitors will discover a variety of embroidery techniques from cross-stitch and couching to other traditional stitches, brought to life on carefully chosen textiles such as linen, cotton, silk, taffeta and velvet. Beyond the *thobe*, a stunning array of headpieces — including *'araqiyeh*, *shatweh*, *wuqayeh* and more — has been paired with veils, silver necklaces, chains, bracelets and other accessories. A wedding trousseau collection will offering a deeper examination of ceremonial traditions and the richness of Palestinian culture and daily life.



Embroidered pillows
as part of the wedding
trousseau
Hebron
1930s



*A necklace with a protection
against the evil eye
Jaffa, Ramlah, or Lydda
1920s*



*Silver bracelet worn by the
wealthy women
Ramallah
Early 20th century*

These collections are more than visually striking, they tell stories of social status, beliefs, and cultural identity. Palestinian embroidery has traditionally been passed down from mother to daughter, carrying skills, memories and family heritage through generations. In towns like Bethlehem and Ramallah, women often created more elaborate embroidery and accessories, reflecting their wealth and style. Wedding ensembles frequently included protective charms and amulets, believed to guard against the evil eye; a tradition seen throughout both towns and villages.

The post Nakba period marked a significance turning point for Palestinian art and culture. With much of their homeland destroyed, many Palestinians sought refuge in neighbouring countries, facing the challenge of preserving their heritage under difficult circumstances. This exhibition highlights how

traditional embroidery evolved, blending authentic styles with contemporary touches while maintaining a strong sense of identity. The IAMM collection showcases this transition, capturing the journey from historic designs to modern interpretations. To fully explore this story, the exhibition unfolds across two dedicated spaces: Special Gallery 1 and Special Gallery 2.

The exhibition Tatreez: Reclaiming Palestine through Embroidery will open to the public on *Friday 19 June 2026*. We warmly invite you to discover the depth of Palestinian tangible art and cultural expression reflected through attire that carries stories of heritage and resilience. An extensively illustrated catalogue featuring highlights from the Palestinian embroidery and dress collection will be available at the Museum Shop.

Venetian box for the Turkish market *Italy, 17 / 18th century AD*

By Rekha Verma

In the sixteenth century, Venice and the Ottoman Empire maintained a pragmatic relationship shaped by trade, diplomacy and occasional conflict. Despite wars over territories such as Cyprus, Venice relied heavily on Ottoman markets and kept a permanent diplomatic presence in Istanbul, prioritising commerce over religious or ideological confrontation. This balance of rivalry and cooperation fostered sustained cultural exchange across the Mediterranean.

The Venetian box reflects this context of exchange and shared taste. Crafted with luxurious materials and refined workmanship, it was designed to appeal to a sophisticated Ottoman audience familiar with Venetian luxury goods. While the exterior appears deliberately restrained and unassuming, the interior reveals meticulously executed decoration, creating a striking contrast that heightened the object's sense of surprise and value. The lid is adorned with a delicate vine-like pattern in gold leaf, echoing the Baroque fascination with ornate natural forms, and the interplay between dark wood and gilded surfaces underscores Venice's

ability to tailor luxury objects for cross-cultural markets.

When the front lid is opened, features such as a classical building become apparent, complete with pediments, columns and arches, revealing Renaissance influences. Rich gold details contrast with the dark wood, while cameo-like insets of valuable materials

such as ivory and mother-of-pearl add layers of luxury and storytelling. The gold's reflective quality enhances the box's appeal, catching light from different angles.

Another fascinating aspect is the box's innovative opening mechanism, which uses the top to secure the front panel. This interlocking design has hooks



or notches that keep the front panel closed when the lid is down, preventing accidental openings and protecting the contents inside. The clever tension created by the closed lid adds both beauty and practicality to the design. To access the front panel, you must lift the lid first, which creates a smooth user experience and highlights the tactile charm of interacting with the box.

The craftsmanship behind this mechanism requires precision to ensure that all parts fit together well. Such features were popular in the

decorative arts during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, adding intrigue and appeal to luxury items sought after by wealthy patrons. The mechanism's complexity also serves as a status symbol, indicating the owner's wealth and sophistication.

The box's design also showcases an eclectic mix of materials, with the dark wood creating an opulent contrast with shiny metal inlays. Additionally, the box symbolises the cultural exchange between Venice and the Ottoman Empire. Venetian

artisans tailored their designs to suit Turkish tastes, combining Italian elegance with Ottoman preferences for intricate decoration. It is a timeless piece that tells a story of artistic mastery and cultural exchange at a time when Venetian artisans were producing a wide range of export goods for the Ottoman world, including inlaid writing boxes, cabinets, mirrors, glassware, metalwork, textiles and carved furniture. The box is both an eye-catching object and a historical piece representing an essential artistic fusion.

Oddy Tests: *Checking What We Can't See*

By: Lalitha Thiagarajah, Nur Wadhihah Hashim,
Aristoteles Georgios Sakellariou

Materials science has an essential place in a museum's conservation laboratories. By applying scientific methods, we can better evaluate materials and make decisions about which ones are suitable for our needs. When different materials come into contact, they can influence each other over time. In museum environments, for example, volatile compounds released from display or mounting materials may react with the materials that artefacts are made of. As a central mission of museums is to preserve the objects in their custody for as long as possible, it is important to minimise any changes. The ideal would be to eliminate such changes altogether.

The Oddy Test is not a new practice. Developed in the 1970s by British Museum conservation scientist W.A. Oddy, it has since been adopted and further refined by museums and archives around the world. The Oddy Test provides an affordable way to evaluate whether materials used for displays, packaging and mounts are chemically safe for museum



Example of Oddy Testing in the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia



Example of an object base made of perspex from the IAMM galleries

artefacts. In simple terms, the test involves placing a sample of the material together with several metal coupons, a small amount of water, and sealing them inside a container. Over time, the metals are examined for signs of corrosion, which can indicate whether the material might release harmful substances that could damage artefacts.

The Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia's conservators regularly carry out the Oddy Test on display and mounting materials to assess their safety for use with museum artefacts. Recently, a series of Oddy Tests was initiated, focusing on modern mounting materials. The samples being tested include locally available papers as well as different cured resins used in 3D printing.

Once these materials are confirmed to be safe, it will allow the IAMM to support the local market as well as ensuring that the museum's collections are cared for in accordance with the highest professional standards.

Educational Programmes in conjunction with 'Busana: Traditional Costumes of the Malay World' Exhibition

By Umi Amalin Zafirah Sakri

Kebaya: Gaya Wanita Melayu Sepanjang Zaman Talk | 16 December 2025

In this session, Puan Zubaidah Sual, an experienced researcher in textiles and jewellery explored the beauty and intricacy of kebaya design as a symbol of Malay women's elegance. Puan Zubaidah also shared insights into the evolution of styles, sewing techniques and the cultural significance of each piece. She highlighted how this traditional attire continues to remain relevant in contemporary fashion and heritage.



Colours of Tradition: Batik Shawl Workshop | 25 December 2026

Participants had the opportunity to learn the art of batik-making and explore Malay textile heritage by designing and creating their own batik shawls. They were introduced to basic sketching, waxing and colouring techniques in a guided and structured setting. The workshop also provided a meaningful experience for participants of all levels to appreciate the artistry and cultural value of batik.

Batik Demonstration | 8 January 2026

The demonstration showed traditional tools, materials and methods used in batik production, from wax application to dyeing techniques. It encouraged learning through observation and interaction, providing an enriching experience for art enthusiasts of all ages.

Estetika Perhiasan Raja Sehari Talk | 17 January 2026

This session explored the beauty and meaning of jewellery worn by Malay brides, highlighting its symbolism, function, and aesthetic value. Participants were introduced to the traditional jewellery types and their role in representing status and identity. Allowing more understanding and appreciation of Malay jewellery that complements and adorns Malay traditional costumes.

Bengkel Dastar & Tengkolok | 24 January 2026

This workshop introduced participants to the art of folding dastar and tengkolok, traditional headgear worn by Malay men. Participants learned the intricate folding techniques while gaining insight into the meanings and symbolism behind the various shapes and styles. The session also highlighted the cultural significance of these head coverings within Malay heritage and traditional attire.





Malay Natural Dyes Talk | 4 February 2026

For centuries, Malay natural dyes were used to create vibrant and lasting colours in textiles. This talk highlighted their historical importance and ongoing influence in inspiring sustainable textile practices.

Curator Talk | 13 February 2026

Guided by the exhibition curator, participants learned about the evolution of textiles, craftsmanship, motifs and silhouettes, as well as how clothing reflected identity, status and regional diversity. The session provided valuable context to the exhibition, enriching the visitor experience through expert interpretation and storytelling.



Little Heritage Stylist | 11 January, 8 February and 8 March 2026

This session offered a fun and meaningful way to learn about Malay cultural dress through play and creativity for kids. As part of our Children's Library mission, these sessions go beyond play. It is an educational journey, helping young learners connect with culture, heritage and the joy of learning in an interactive, memorable way.

Salutations and Heartfelt Gratitude

**HER ROYAL HIGHNESS THE TENGKU AMPUAN OF PAHANG
TUNKU AZIZAH AMINAH MAIMUNAH ISKANDARIAH
BINTI ALMARHUM SULTAN ISKANDAR AL-HAJ**

GRACIOUSLY CONSENTS TO DELIVER
A ROYAL ADDRESS
"INTRODUCTION TO TENUN PAHANG DIRAJA"

IN CONJUNCTION WITH
THE SPECIAL EXHIBITION
"BUSANA:
TRADITIONAL COSTUMES
OF THE MALAY WORLD"

6 APRIL 2026, corresponding to 17 SYAWAL 1447H
10:30 A.M.
BRIEFING AREA
LEVEL LG, ISLAMIC ARTS MUSEUM MALAYSIA.

*Discover the heritage, artistry, and legacy
of this treasured Malay royal textile*



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Scan here
to register



For any inquiry, kindly contact the Education Department
at 03-2092 7031 or email to education@iamm.org.my

Registration will close
upon reaching maximum capacity.

Incoming:

Introduction to Tenun Pahang Diraja by Her Royal Highness Tengku Ampuan Pahang Tunku Azizah Aminah Maimunah Iskandariah binti Almarhum Sultan Iskandar Al-Haj | 6 April 2026

Sulaman Melayu: Seni yang Kian Dilupakan Talk and Demonstration by Syahida Ramli | 11 April 2026

Monogram Embroidery Workshop by Syahida Ramli | 12 April 2026 For centuries, Malay natural dyes were used to create vibrant and lasting colours in textiles. This talk highlighted their historical importance and ongoing influence in inspiring sustainable textile practices.

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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