

The Taj Mahal is considered one of the finest Islamic monuments in the world.

Islamic art's bedazzling heritage

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The beauty of Islamic art
enthralled Zaidi Isham Ismail

THE moment you step into a mosque, one cannot help but be bedazzled by the art adorning the walls and dome, down to carpets.

A visitor is exposed to a kaleidoscope of colours in the calligraphy, arabesque, geometry, illuminated writings and floral patterns covering carpets, metal works, pottery, textiles and woodwork.

Take Islamic calligraphy, which was developed in the seventh century. This art of beautiful and flowing text is used to illustrate the Quran.

Whichever form of Islamic art you are exposed to, you should bear in mind that each piece is a celebration of daily life and opens the doorway to the true beauty of God and His creation.

Islamic art comes from a reli-

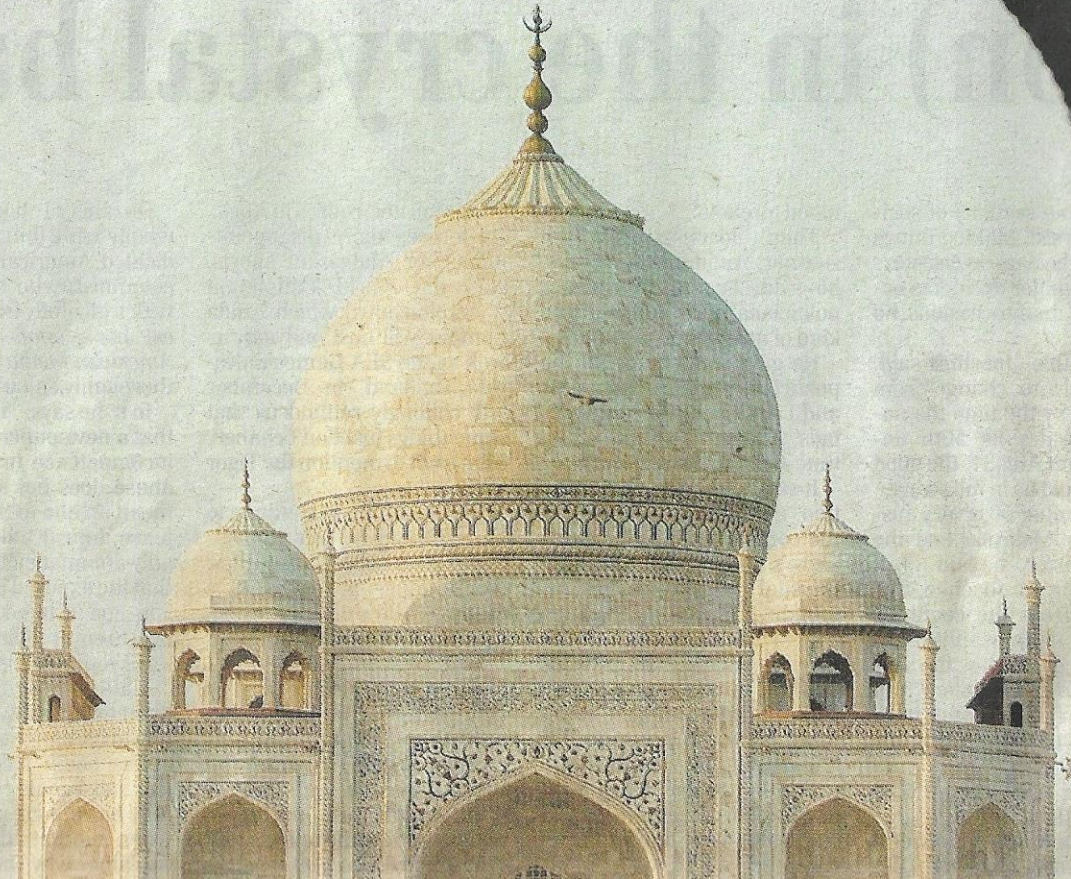
Themed "Islamic Science Ahead of Its Time", the exhibition, from Jan 8-14, will be held at the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre and from Jan 23 to March 31 at the National Science Centre, Bukit Kiara, Kuala Lumpur.

It will showcase 148 artefacts and other scientific findings of Islamic thinkers.

The areas of expertise covered include mathematics, arts, architecture, inventions, medicine, astronomy, travel, geography and technology.

The beauty of Islamic art has inspired Western civilisation and various artists.

Europe came in contact with Arabic calligraphy through trade and exchange of gifts at royal courts and not surprisingly, the





Europeans imitated Arabic calligraphy without knowing what it meant.

The Islamic texts in the Tulum Mosque, Cairo, for example, were reproduced in Gothic at first and then spread to France and the rest of Europe.

The arabesque, which can also be floral using a stalk of leaf or flower or a combination of floral and geometric patterns, fascinated European artists, including Leonardo Da Vinci.

A staggering array of geometric patterns by Muslim craftsmen explored the concept of infinity through mathematical repetitions and made its way to England.

King Henry VIII (1509-1547) also ruled with the famous Islamic knot-style pattern, which appeared in a portrait as the border of a cloak and curtains behind him.

However, the Prophet Muhammad cautioned against the portrayal of human or animal forms in art so that Muslims would not revert to worshipping idols, figures or the material world — a practice which would distract attention to God.

Towards this end, the Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (Mosti) is organising a three-month exhibition to highlight Islamic achievements.

SCIENTIFIC EXCELLENCE
IN
ISLAMIC CIVILIZATION
EXHIBITION

Islamic Science Ahead of Its Time

8-14th JANUARY 2007
EXHIBITION HALL 1
KUALA LUMPUR CONVENTION CENTRE
(KLCC)

Islamic art is a celebration of daily life.