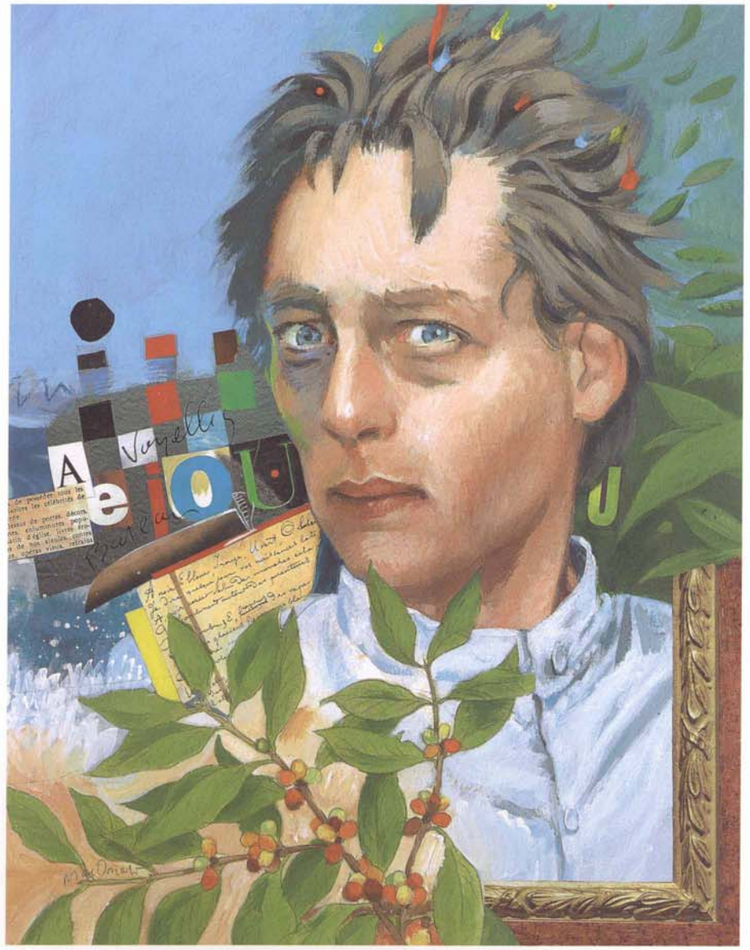

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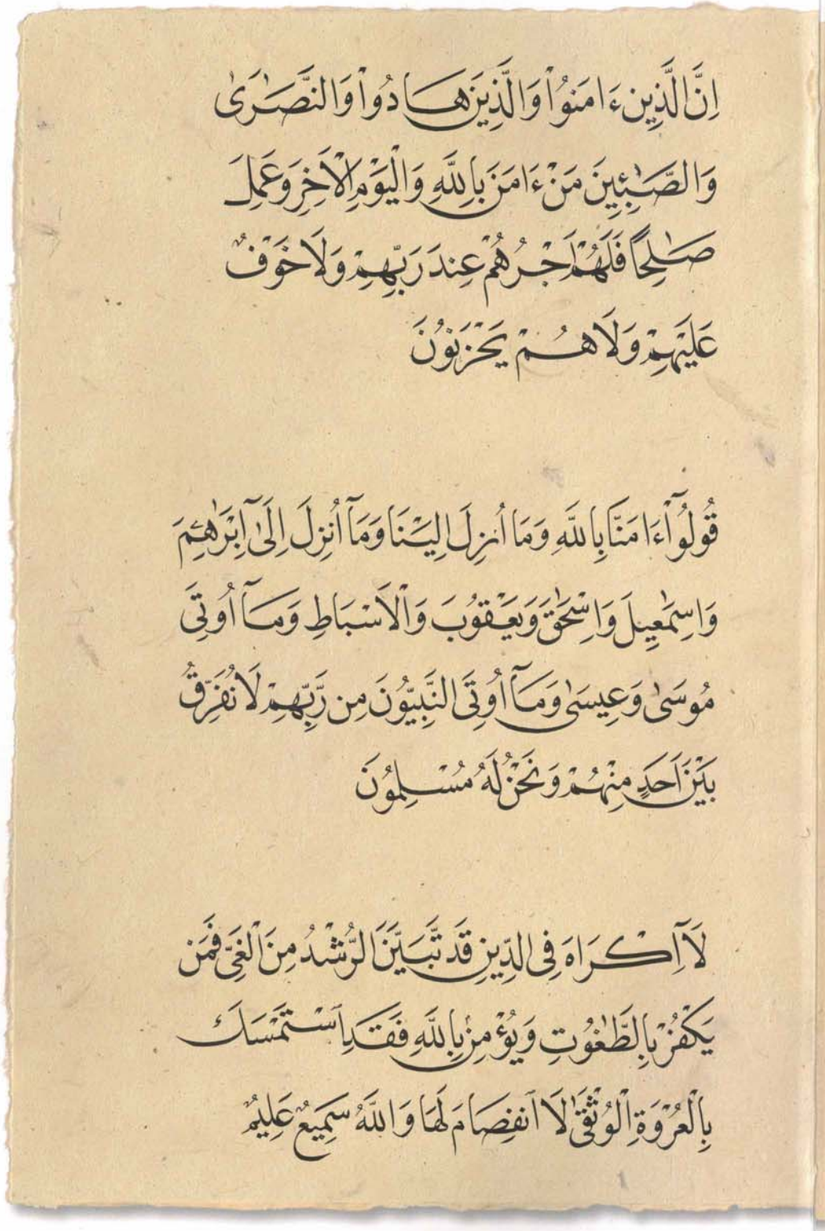
NEW STAMP CELEBRATES 'ID

from the Qur'an


إِنَّ الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَالَّذِينَ هَادُوا وَالنَّصَارَىٰ
وَالصَّابِئِينَ مَنْ آمَنَ بِاللَّهِ وَالْيَوْمِ الْآخِرِ وَعَمِلَ
صَالِحًا فَلَهُمْ أَجْرُهُمْ عِنْدَ رَبِّهِمْ وَلَا خَوْفٌ
عَلَيْهِمْ وَلَا هُمْ يَحْزَنُونَ

Those who believe [in the Qur'an], and those who follow the Jewish [scriptures], and the Christians and the Sabians—any who believe in God and the Last Day, and work righteousness—shall have their reward with their Lord. On them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve.

CHAPTER 2
"AL-BAQARA" ("THE HEIFER")
VERSE 62

قُولُوا آمَنَّا بِاللَّهِ وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَيْنَا وَمَا أُنْزِلَ إِلَىٰ إِبْرَاهِيمَ
وَإِسْمَاعِيلَ وَإِسْحَاقَ وَيَعْقُوبَ وَالْأَسْبَاطِ وَمَا أُوتِيَ
مُوسَىٰ وَعِيسَىٰ وَمَا أُوتِيَ النَّبِيُّونَ مِنْ رَبِّهِمْ لَا نُفَرِّقُ
بَيْنَ أَحَدٍ مِنْهُمْ وَنَحْنُ لَهُ مُسْلِمُونَ

Say ye: "We believe in God, and the revelation given to us, and to Abraham, Ismail, Isaac, Jacob, and the Tribes, and that given to Moses and Jesus, and that given to [all] Prophets from their Lord. We make no difference between one and another of them, and we bow to God [in Islam]."

CHAPTER 2
"AL-BAQARA" ("THE HEIFER")
VERSE 136

لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّينِ قَدْ تَبَيَّنَ الرُّشْدُ مِنَ الْغَيِّ فَمَنْ
يَكْفُرْ بِالطَّاغُوتِ وَيُؤْمِنْ بِاللَّهِ فَقَدِ اسْتَمْسَكَ
بِالْعُرْوَةِ الْوُثْقَىٰ لَا انْفِصَامَ لَهَا وَاللَّهُ سَمِيعٌ عَلِيمٌ

Let there be no compulsion in religion. Truth stands out clear from error. Whoever rejects evil and believes in God hath grasped the most trustworthy hand-hold, that never breaks. And God heareth and knoweth all things.

CHAPTER 2
"AL-BAQARA" ("THE HEIFER")
VERSE 256

يَا أَيُّهَا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا كُونُوا قَوَّامِينَ لِلَّهِ شُهَدَاءَ بِالْقِسْطِ
وَلَا يَجْرِمَنَّكُمْ شَنَآنُ قَوْمٍ عَلَىٰ أَلَّا تَعْدِلُوا اعْدِلُوا
هُوَ أَقْرَبُ لِلتَّقْوَىٰ

O you who believe, be steadfast to God as witnesses for justice, and let not your abhorrence of a people induce you to act inequitably; rather, be equitable, for this is nearer to God-fearing.

CHAPTER 5
"AL-MA'IDAH" ("THE TABLE")
VERSE 8
FROM *THE BOUNTEOUS KORAN: A TRANSLATION OF MEANING AND COMMENTARY* BY M. M. KHATIB

مِنْ أَجْلِ ذَٰلِكَ كَتَبْنَا عَلَىٰ بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ أَنَّهُ مَنْ قَتَلَ
نَفْسًا بِغَيْرِ نَفْسٍ أَوْ فَسَادٍ فِي الْأَرْضِ فَكَأَنَّمَا قَتَلَ النَّاسَ
جَمِيعًا وَمَنْ أَحْيَاهَا فَكَأَنَّمَا أَحْيَا النَّاسَ جَمِيعًا

On that account: We ordained for the Children of Israel that if anyone slew a person—unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land—it would be as if he slew the whole people. And if anyone saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people.

CHAPTER 5
"AL-MA'IDAH" ("THE TABLE")
VERSE 32

يَا أَيُّهَا النَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقْنَاكُمْ مِنْ ذَكَرٍ وَأُنْثَىٰ وَجَعَلْنَاكُمْ شُعُوبًا
وَقَبَائِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوا إِنَّ أَكْرَمَكُمْ عِنْدَ اللَّهِ أَتْقَاكُمْ

O mankind! We created you from a single [pair] of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other, [not that ye may despise each other.] Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is [he who is] the most righteous of you.

CHAPTER 49
"HUJURAT" ("THE DWELLINGS")
VERSE 13

Horrified and saddened beyond ordinary words by the tragedy of September 11, the editors of *Saudi Aramco World* present a selection of verses from the Qur'an, the holy scripture of Islam. We hope they will shed some light on the religion revealed 14 centuries ago as a gift to all humankind and today embraced by one-fifth of the world's population. With one exception, the English-language texts—they are necessarily interpretations, not translations in the strict sense—are from *The Holy Quran: Text, Translation and Commentary* by Abdullah Yusuf Ali; the calligraphy is by Mohamed Zakariya. Because the Message of God, as recorded in the Qur'an, is holy to Muslims, we urge readers to avoid secondary uses of these pages that might be considered disrespectful.

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Cover:

Muhib Beekun of Sparks, Nevada was a 10-year-old stamp collector when he began to wonder why there were stamps marking the holidays of other faiths, but not those of Islam. Now Beekun is 15, and the US Postal Service has released 75 million 34-cent stamps honoring the Muslim *'id*s, or feasts. "If I don't do something, it will not happen," he remembers thinking. Photo by Kathleen Burke.

Back Cover:

At age 19, Arthur Rimbaud quit the Paris cafés and his dazzling reputation as a literary *enfant terrible* to lead a hard, itinerant life. He became the first European to do business in the walled Ethiopian city of Harar, near the land where coffee is believed to have originated. Both happiness and wealth eluded him until his death at 37, and he knew nothing of his fame. Illustration by Norman MacDonald.

22: MUSEO ARQUEOLÓGICO NACIONAL, MADRID / METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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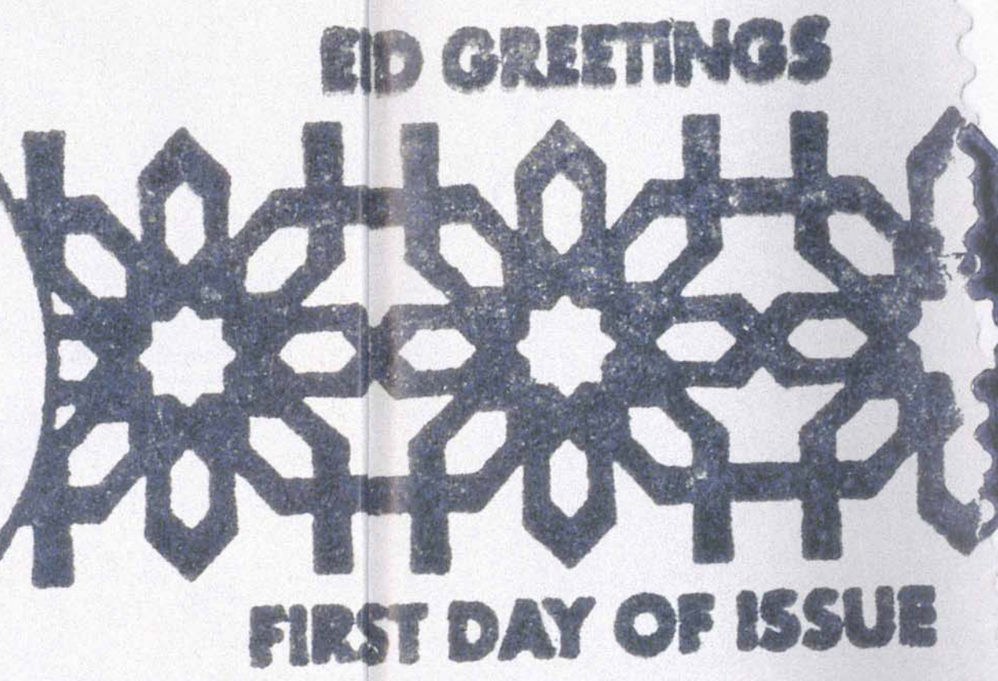


NEW STAMP CELEBRATES 'ID

WRITTEN BY
JOHN MARLOWE

PHOTOGRAPHED BY
KATHLEEN BURKE

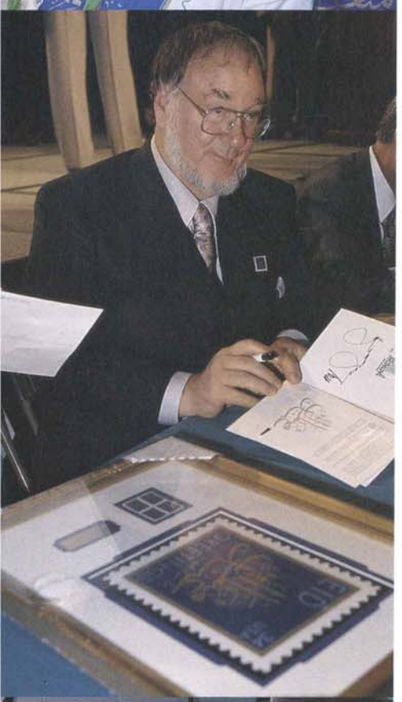
In 1996, when Muhib Beekun was in the fifth grade, he and his stamp-collecting family enjoyed stamps honoring holidays: Christmas, Hanukkah and, more recently, Kwanzaa and Cinco de Mayo. One day, Muhib realized that there was no American stamp that honored any Muslim holiday—not even the two *'id*s, or feasts, that are highlights of the Muslim calendar. He asked his mother, Nadiah, about it, and after several letters to Muslim organizations led to little encouragement, he placed a call from his home in Sparks, Nevada to a family friend in Cincinnati, Ohio: Aminah Assilmi.

Muhib was calling the right person, he knew. Assilmi, director of the International Union of Muslim Women, knew how to get things done. She helped Muhib write to Postmaster General William Henderson to ask *him* why there was no *'id* stamp. Henderson's staff explained to Muhib about the Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee and how it could be petitioned to recommend the issue of a new stamp.

"We can do that, but we need help," Assilmi told Muhib.

Muhib agreed. "Everybody says something is impossible, so they do

Muhib Beekun with Aminah Assilmi, director of the International Union of Muslim Women, at the September 1 ceremony marking the stamp's first day of issue. The event took place at the convention of the Islamic Society of North America in Des Plaines, Illinois.



nothing. If I don't do something, it will not happen," he thought. He drew an *'id* stamp and sent it to Henderson, with another letter. Then he, Nadiah and Assilmi began contacting Islamic schools to raise interest and get other kids on board: A letter, e-mail, phone, petition and post-card campaign was born, and it gradually gained the enthusiastic support of thousands of Muslim children across the nation. Some kids created their own designs for *'id* stamps and decorated a mile-long paper banner.

"Mostly it went through moms and kids," says Nadiah. "The post office bent over backward to help," she adds. "But when they received about the 8000th letter, they called telling us to 'stop, stop, please!'"

The Internet, too, was crucial to success, says Chaplain Maryam Mostoufi. "Modern technology made this a reality in a short time. Islam teaches that, if we walk toward God, He will come running to us. We just didn't know He would do it on the Internet!"

When the 13-member Citizen's Stamp Advisory Committee made a recommendation to Henderson in favor of an *'id* stamp, he signed it, authorizing the first U.S. stamp to recognize a major Islamic event.

Phil Jordan, consultant to the advisory committee, was asked to find an artist, and quickly suggested calligrapher and instrument-maker Mohamed Zakariya, who agreed to the project. "It is encouraging to see an *'id* message on an ordinary stamp," says Zakariya, whose work graces galleries and museums from New York to Qatar, sundials and astrolabes in the airport in Jiddah, Saudi Arabia, and displays at the Saudi Aramco Exhibit in Dhahran.

Zakariya used classical styles, tools and materials to create his design, including paper specially prepared for Arabic calligraphy. After a year's sketching, he proposed two versions of the stamp design to Henderson.

The one chosen uses a Turkish style of calligraphy in gold letters on a royal-blue background. The words, in Arabic, are "*'id mubarak*" ("blessed feast"), a phrase as common among Muslims as "Merry Christmas" among Christians, and equally applicable to the two major feasts of the Muslim calendar: *'id al-fitr*, the feast of fast-breaking, which follows the holy month of Ramadan, and *'id al-adha*, the feast of the sacrifice, which follows the days of the Hajj, or pilgrimage to Makkah. The words "EID GREETINGS" run above and below the calligraphy.

Can English-speaking Americans appreciate a stamp whose design is mostly Arabic? "You can appreciate Italian opera without understanding Italian," says Zakariya, "so I'm sure they can appreciate the beauty of Arabic calligraphy without understanding Arabic."

Five years after Muhib decided to "do something," the stamp he wanted to see is a reality. Some 75 million of the 34-cent stamps have been printed and were released in a first-day-of-issue ceremony at Des Plaines, Illinois on September 1. One Muslim student, on first hearing that it had been approved by the US Postal Service, said, "*Now* I feel like an American." ⊕

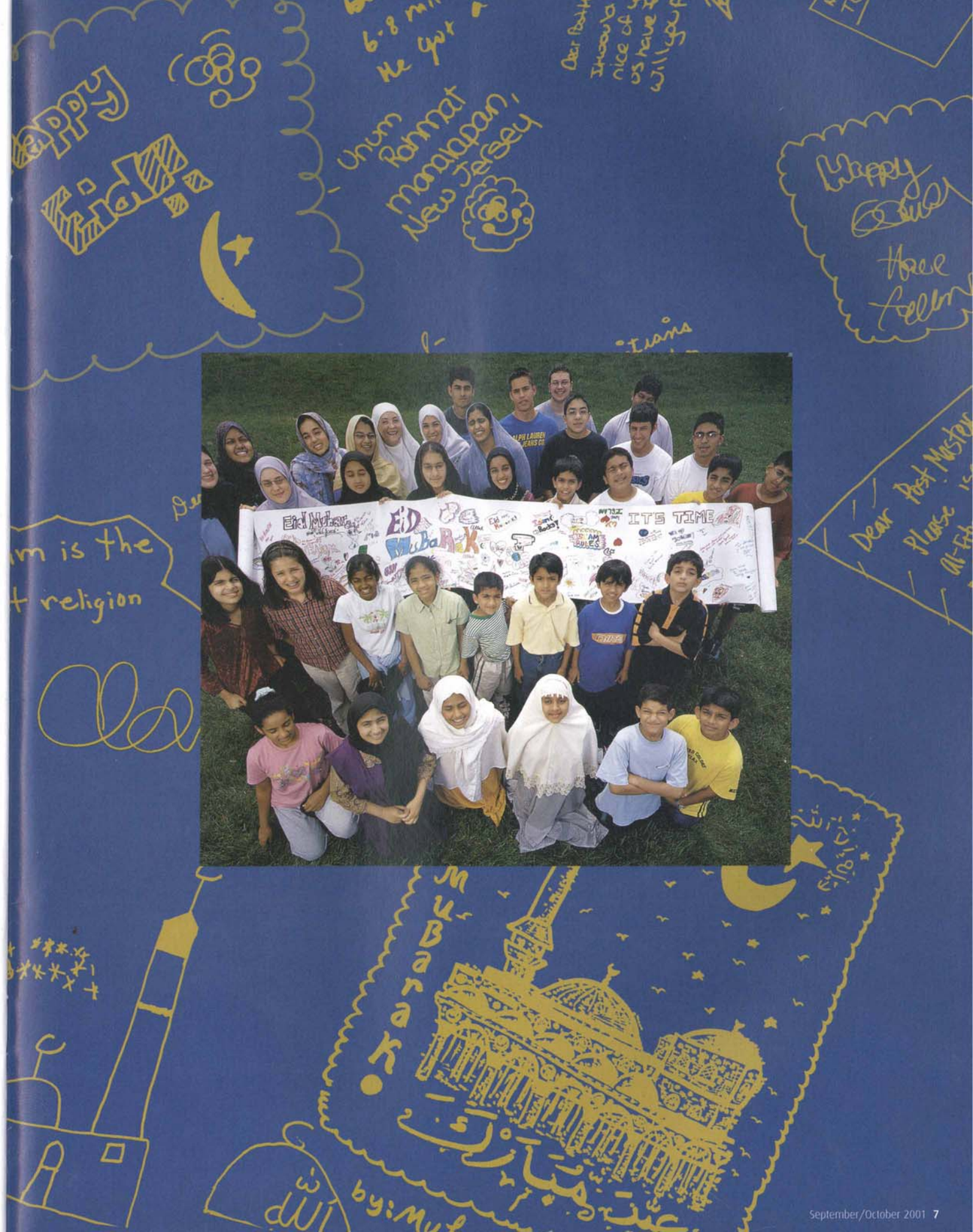
Top: **"I told Muhib at the beginning that it was a great idea, but he'd have to do it himself," says Nadiah Beekun, shown with her children Abdullah, 14; Muhib, 15; Sumayya, 9; and Issa, 12. "Mostly [the campaign] went through moms and kids," she adds.** Center: **Stamp designer Mohamed Zakariya signs commemorative programs on September 1. At** left, **US Postal Service employee Noor Mohammed sells *'id* stamps.** Opposite: **Students from the Islamic Center of Greater Cincinnati were among more than 8000 children who sent letters and decorated a mile-long scroll** (background) **that helped persuade the US Postal Service to issue the stamp. "The whole object was to teach children that they can make a difference," says Assilmi, who can be seen in the back row, the left-most of two women wearing a white *hijab*.**

John Marlowe (mstrjack3@home.com) is a free-lance writer who lives in the San Francisco Bay area and the Peloponnese. **Kathleen Burke** is a freelance photographer and writer who lives near Chicago.

Related articles have appeared in these past issues of *Aramco World* and *Saudi Aramco World*:

Mohamed Zakariya: J/F 92

OPPOSITE, INSET: JIM CALLAWAY



Arthur Rimbaud, Coffee Trader

WRITTEN BY RICHARD GOODMAN
ILLUSTRATED BY NORMAN MACDONALD

On a sweltering day in August 1880, a tall, thin blue-eyed Frenchman walked into the offices of Viannay, Bardey et Cie. in Aden, Yemen, and asked for a job. He said he was from the Jura, and had lately overseen a gang of laborers in Cyprus; the work had been finished, so he'd come south to find something else. He had a letter of introduction. He knew some Arabic, too.

Well, said co-owner Pierre Bardey, we might have something for you, Monsieur...? Rimbaud? Viannay, Bardey et Cie, whose main office was in Lyon, exported coffee, among other things, and Bardey thought they could use a foreman in their coffee-sorting warehouse. Lodging would be included, and meals. The pay? Well, not much, to be truthful, just seven francs a day. But if one were careful... Yes, it was indeed hot in Aden this time of year. Over 38 degrees (100°F) indoors. But one could get used to anything.

For the next eleven years, until he died miserably in a hospital in Marseille, Arthur Rimbaud, France's great 19th-century *enfant terrible,* whose poetry was to exert enormous influence on French literature, lived mostly in Aden and in Harar, Ethiopia, working in the coffee trade. He was, in fact, a pioneer in the business, the first European to oversee the export of the celebrated coffee of Harar from the country where coffee was born. He was only the third European ever to set foot in the city, and the first to do business there. How his life swung from the sublime to the commercial is one of the most perplexing mysteries in the history of modern literature.

When Arthur Rimbaud (1854–1891) abandoned poetry altogether in 1873, at the age of 19 or 20, he left behind a small, incendiary and revolutionary body of work that included "The Drunken Boat," *A Season in Hell,* and *Illuminations,* a series of mystical prose poems. He had come out of nowhere, from the small town of Charleville in the Ardennes. His parents were not literary. He began writing poetry at 13, serious poetry at 16. He came to Paris and befriended the poet Paul Verlaine. They had a tempestuous relationship which culminated in Verlaine's shooting Rimbaud in the wrist in a fit of hysteria. Verlaine went to prison; Rimbaud, after completing *A Season in Hell,* burned his papers and stopped writing altogether. All this in three short years.

From that point onward, Rimbaud led an itinerant life marked by an insatiable restlessness and, especially in the end, a concerted and frustrated quest for money. His wanderings took him from one unlikely place to another: from Indonesia, where he deserted from the Dutch colonial army; to Scandinavia, where he interpreted for a touring Danish circus; to Cyprus, where he supervised road-building gangs; and, finally, in 1880, to Aden in the British protectorate of Yemen near the southern entrance of the Red Sea. Intermittently, he returned—or was repatriated, sick or penniless, by the French diplomatic corps—to his family in Charleville. It was a life from which literature was completely absent. As far as I can determine, in all the letters he wrote to his family during these last years, he never once mentions literature. (He does mention books, but they are invariably technical or instructional ones.) He certainly never wrote poetry again. He did write, though: He published several pieces on East Africa, including a treatise on Ogaden that appeared in the bulletin of the French Geographical Society. It was decently, though not memorably, written, but its author hardly seemed the same Arthur Rimbaud who had upset and forever altered the French literary world.

In fact, like many before him and after, Rimbaud reinvented himself. The problem for posterity has been that with this reinvention, Rimbaud discarded his marvelous ability to spin words in the stars. When, some years later, Pierre Bardey's brother Alfred happened to learn that Rimbaud had written poetry and was revered in certain small circles in Paris, he confronted Rimbaud with this. Rimbaud seemed aghast: "Absurd! Ridiculous! Disgusting!" he said to Bardey. The Rimbaud who had written "The Drunken Boat" and *A Season in Hell* was dead and buried. The new Rimbaud wanted to make money. And, perhaps, to do some exploring and a bit of photography. *This* was the Arthur Rimbaud who arrived in Aden, Yemen in August of 1880: a different person entirely.

At that time, coffee had become extremely popular in Europe, and especially in France. Though the plant

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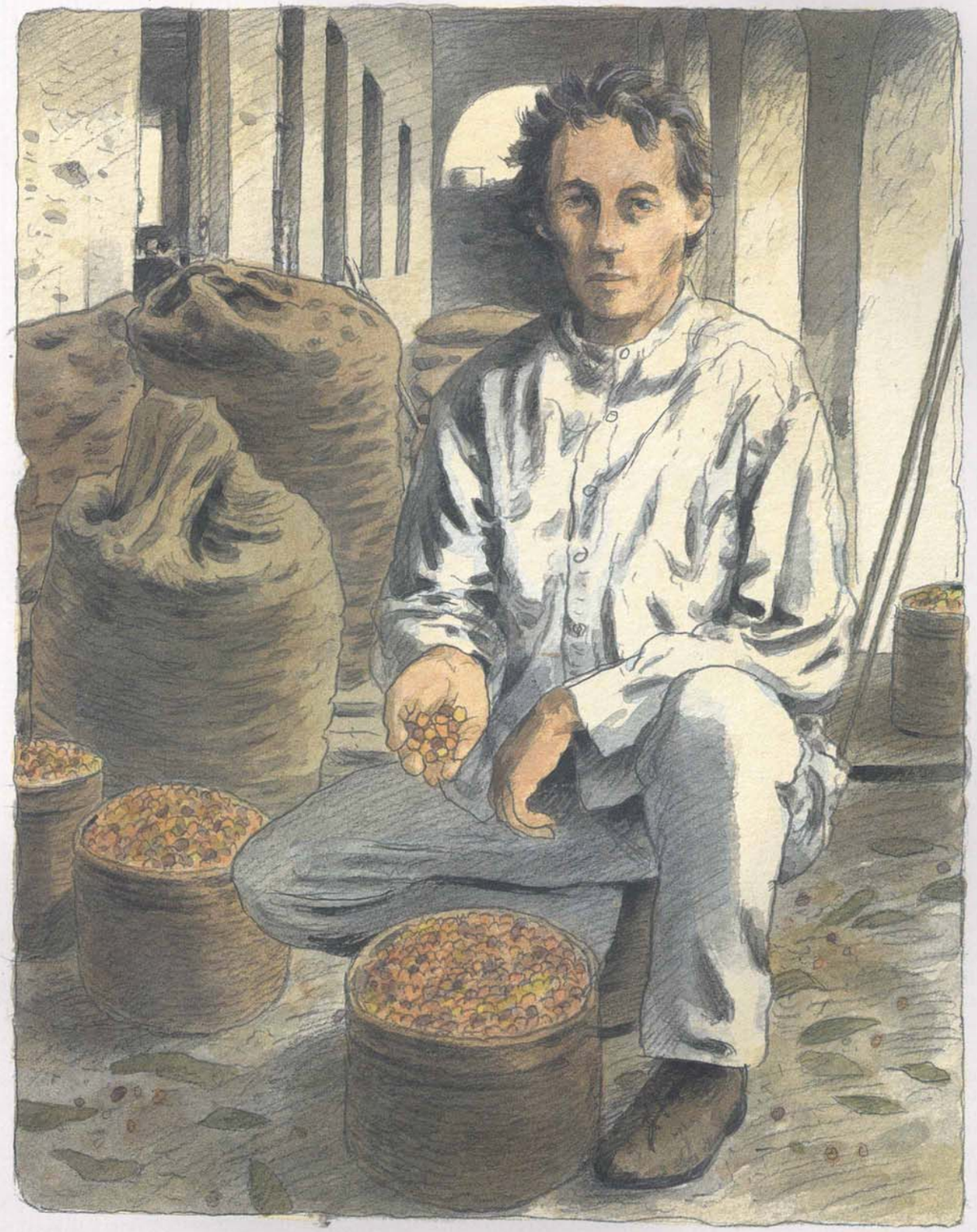


Aden, 1880.
As foreman of the coffee-sorting house of Viannay, Bardey et Cie., Rimbaud found himself at the epicenter of the world coffee trade, but it was a life from which literature was completely absent.

Paris, 1872.
Rimbaud's poetry was a sensation in Paris when he was only in his teens—yet at 19, he burned his remaining papers and never wrote verse again. His correspondence with his family, however, especially his sister Isabelle, opposite, **continued until his death.**

was being cultivated elsewhere—notably in Java by the Dutch—the best coffee was considered to come from Yemen. Coffee had come into its own there. The name of the port of al-Mukha in Yemen had become synonymous with coffee, and still denotes a certain superior quality today. For years, Arab merchants and traders had kept coffee entirely to themselves. Releasing it at last to the outside world, they then held a monopoly on its trade. They knew a good thing when they saw one.

Coffee's origin is placed variously in Yemen and Ethiopia, with most food historians now believing it to be the latter. Some believe that the word "coffee" derives from the name of the Ethiopian province of Kaffa. It was discovered perhaps as early as the ninth century, and the legend of its discovery was described by the French traveler Jean de La Roque in *A Voyage to Arabia the Happy,* published in English in 1726. La Roque writes that a goatherd noticed that after eating the berries of a particular bush his goats "leaped and frisked about all night." A local cleric heard of this and gave some of the berries to his disciples "to hinder them from sleeping, when they were called up to their prayers...."

It was not a great leap from munching the berries to making a decoction of them, and from that to roasting the "beans" they contained before boiling them in water—and the revivifying cup of coffee was born. For hundreds of years since, everyone from college students in need of stamina to writers in need of stimulation—Balzac drank up

When asked about his past as a poet, and told that he was revered in some circles in Paris, Rimbaud seemed aghast: "Absurd! Ridiculous! Disgusting!" The new Rimbaud wanted money, and domesticity.

to 20, or possibly 50, cups a day—has turned gratefully to the Ethiopian bean.

The coffee tree—really a large bush—grows to some six meters (20') in height, but is usually pruned to around four meters (12') in cultivation. Its flowers, which have an appealing jasmine-like scent, drop off and are replaced by red berries. It is what is inside these berries—the coffee beans—that is coveted. Machines remove the pulp, and then, usually, the beans are washed and dried. They are shipped green, eventually to be roasted. (The roasting of beans began in the 13th century.) The peak harvest in Ethiopia—it's still done by hand—is in November and December.

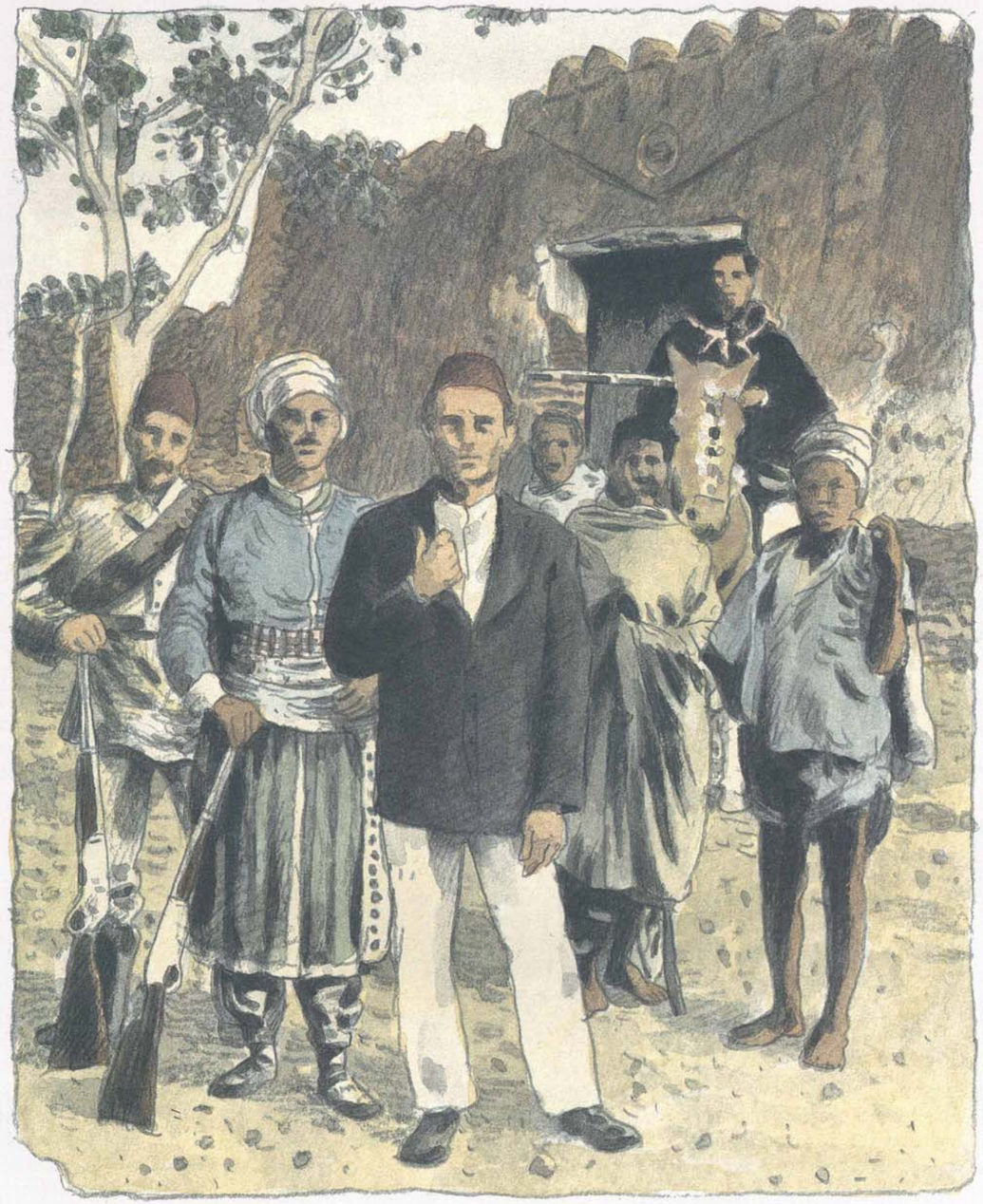
Arabs had been drinking coffee for hundreds of years when Europeans finally got a taste of this stimulating drink. They eventually broke the Arab monopoly and began importing coffee beans themselves. Coffee was introduced in France in 1660 by some merchants from Marseille who had acquired the habit of drinking it in the Middle East, where they traded. Upon returning from the Levant, they decided they couldn't live without it. It reached Paris in 1669 when the Turkish ambassador began holding lavish coffee parties for the French nobility. After that, it was only a matter of time before the general population got in on it. The Café Procope, Paris's first genuine coffeehouse, opened in 1689. (You can still drink coffee there today, as Voltaire and Benjamin Franklin did in their day.) By 1880, the date of Rimbaud's arrival in Yemen, half of the entire Yemeni export coffee crop went to France.

Alfred and Pierre Bardey, businessmen from Lyon, were well aware of their countrymen's thirst for coffee. They traveled to Yemen—then under British control—and opened a branch of their company. (You will find it called by different names in different reincarnations: Bardey et Cie.; Viannay, Bardey et Cie.; and Mazeran, Viannay, Bardey et Cie.) They would export the great treasures of Yemen and those of East Africa, just across the Red Sea: ivory, gum, hides—and coffee. In exchange, they would barter the finest Massachusetts shirting, among other eagerly sought items. The entire process would be much simpler now that the Suez Canal was open. (In the 18th century, La Roque had traveled around Cape Horn to reach Aden.)

The newly hired Arthur Rimbaud was to work as the foreman in the Bardey's coffee-sorting house. He was now at the epicenter of the coffee trade. (The coffee trade in Yemen at the time of Rimbaud's arrival is ably explained by Charles Nicholl in his book *Somebody Else: Arthur Rimbaud in Africa, 1880-91,* published in 1999 by the University of Chicago Press. I have relied heavily on its insights.) The coffee, which was grown in the highlands of Yemen, was transported to the capital city of Aden by camel. It normally arrived as berries from which the pulp had to be removed; the resulting beans then had to be cleaned, graded, packed in large burlap sacks and sent off to Marseille.

One can imagine the heat and dust of such a warehouse in August, when Rimbaud reported the temperature rising to 43 degrees (110°F). The sorters and baggers—mostly Indian women, the wives of Indian soldiers posted there—worked from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Rimbaud learned quickly, and almost immediately became a valued employee. In just one month, he was able to write his family that he was "very up to date on the present coffee trade. I have the absolute confidence of my employer." The only problem was that he loathed the town of Aden with all his heart. "Aden is a terrible rock," he wrote his parents, "without a single blade of grass or a drop of good water." The heat was awful. "We sweat liters of water here every day," he told them. He was looking for a way to get out, and declared he'd probably go to Zanzibar. When he heard that Bardey et Cie. wanted to establish a branch in Harar, in the interior of Abyssinia, he jumped at the chance to go.



Harar, 1881.
He spent eight years in Harar exporting not only the coffee most desired by European connoisseurs, but hides and ivory as well. He also helped run guns for King Menelik II.

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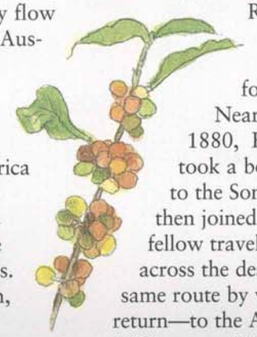
In Harar, his hopes became increasingly bourgeois. He dreamed he might "someday, in a few years, take my ease in a place that suits me pretty well, and have a family."

Alfred Bardey had made an exploratory trip to Abyssinia and was excited about the possibilities for trade and profit. In early November, 1880, Arthur Rimbaud wrote his family, "The company has founded an agency in Harar, a region that you'll find on the map in the south-east of Abyssinia. We'll export coffee, hides, gum, and so on... The country is very healthy and cool due to its elevation." Bardey et Cie. offered Rimbaud a posting there, and on November 10 he signed a three-year contract with the firm. He was to receive 1800 rupees a year, plus food, lodging and one percent of the net profit coming out of Harar. (It is often difficult to follow the monetary transactions of the time, as they flow freely from rupees to francs to Austrian thalers.)

So, there he was, age 26, the equivalent of at least one lifetime already behind him, ready to plunge into Eastern Africa on a search for coffee.

Rimbaud, it turned out, was not unequipped for the job. He had a great facility for languages. He already knew Latin, English, German and probably Dutch, and had even studied Arabic in his home town of Charleville. He would thus be well prepared to learn the language spoken in Harar. (There were two, in fact.) He was genuinely interested in the culture of the lands where he resided, and he was charitable. Indeed, "charitable" is the word most often used by his contemporaries in Yemen and Africa to describe his relations with the locals. For a man who was to become obsessed with making money, hoarding and accounting for every *sou*, this seems ironic.

Though often frustrated by his dealings with local traders, he was, it turns out, a very sharp merchant. Much later, someone who knew him in Africa but who had only subsequently learned of his artistic past said, "Far be it for me to judge his past as a poet, but I can state with absolute conviction that he was a passionate trader." Who would have predicted that the author of the shimmering, gorgeous "Voyelles"—which by itself would have assured Rimbaud a place in the history of French literature—had a talent for trading?



Near the end of November 1880, Rimbaud left Aden and took a boat across the Red Sea to the Somali port of Zeila. He then joined a caravan. He and his fellow travelers made a 20-day trek across the desert on horseback—the same route by which the coffee would return—to the Abyssinian city of Harar, 1830 meters (6000') feet above sea level. Until just a few years earlier, it had been a closed city. In the end, Rimbaud would reside there on three different occasions and spend more than eight years there altogether—the longest time he spent in any single place in his life, except Charleville. Eleven years later, he would make his last return trip by this route, unable to walk, his leg swollen with a huge tumor, carried in a litter by hired porters.

It is hard to imagine the world into which Arthur Rimbaud entered. Harar, a city of some 20,000 inhabitants, was still primitive. The sanitary system consisted of throwing refuse—including dead bodies—over the town walls after dark to expectant hyenas. Just five years earlier, in 1875, the city had been conquered by the Egyptians, and a garrison of Egyptian soldiers was stationed there when Rimbaud arrived. Although the city had been closed to non-Muslims for centuries, one very unusual European Christian had been there: the amazing Richard Burton. Fresh from his impudent trip to Mecca, he again disguised himself as an Arab and, in 1855, made the same overland journey Rimbaud would make 25 years later. Burton described his visit in *First Footsteps in East Africa*, where he wrote that "the coffee of Harar is too well known in the markets of Europe to require description." This coffee had long been exported when Rimbaud arrived—but not by Europeans.

What was it about coffee from Harar that made it so desirable then—and still today? Joel Schapira, in *The Book of Coffee & Tea*, says that Harar coffee is the "finest of Ethiopian coffees," with a taste "characterized by a winy pungency, an exquisitely piquant aroma." An Ethiopian trading company praises its "medium acidity, full body and...

Ethiopia, 1891.
In the spring of 1891, his tumorous knee causing him great pain, Rimbaud was carried on a 15-day journey from Harar to the coast. From Aden he was evacuated to Marseille. Opposite: **A handful of small self-portraits from his Harar years is all that remains of Rimbaud's photographic hobby.**

distinctive deep mocca flavor." It is a form of *Coffea arabica,* the variety, indigenous to Ethiopia, that accounts for 90 percent of world production.

Arthur Rimbaud entered Harar unhindered. He situated himself and began trading immediately. From the first, he liked the climate. "Cool and not unhealthy," he described it. He started bartering—not just for coffee but for hides and ivory as well, for the Harar branch of Bardey et Cie. could not subsist on the coffee trade alone. He began gathering coffee and sending it by caravan back to Zeila and then by boat across the Red Sea to Aden. His office was usually filled with sacks of coffee beans, and he would occasionally sleep among them. In February, two months after his arrival, he wrote his family and said that he was having 20 kilos of *café moka* sent to them at his own expense, "if the customs duty isn't too much."

Then, almost immediately, he grew bored. It's not hard to see why. Even if he had forsaken his literary self, he remained a highly intelligent, keenly observant and very emotional man. He needed intellectual stimulation, and he did not find it in Harar. "Thankfully, this life is the only one we have," he wrote home, "and that's for certain, because I can't imagine another life more boring than this one!" This is the man who, ten years earlier, had enthusiastically written to the poet Théodore de Banville, "I will be a Parnassian! I swear, *cher Maître*, I will always worship the two goddesses, the Muse and Liberty." Now, his hopes—and, increasingly, his despairs—were more bourgeois. "What good is this coming and going," he wrote to Charleville, "this hard work and these upheavals among strange peoples, these languages I stuff my head with and these nameless tortures, if I can't someday, in a few years, take my ease in a place that suits me pretty well, and have a family—or have, at least, a son whom I can spend the rest of my life bringing up the way I think he should be, whom I can adorn and arm with the most complete education it's possible to get in this age, and whom I can see become a renowned engineer, a man whose knowledge makes him rich and powerful. But who knows the length of my days in these mountains? I may simply disappear among the population, and never be heard of again...."

Partly to alleviate his pressing boredom, Rimbaud took up photography. He had a camera shipped to him from France and began taking pictures. To this we owe the last of the rare photographs we have of Arthur Rimbaud. They are self-portraits. In a simple statement filled with great poignancy, he sent them home to his family so that they "would remember my face." Looking at the photograph of the man in white cotton tropical garb standing in front of a coffee bush, it's difficult to believe he was 29 when it was taken: He looks 50.

He did well at his trade, though—so well that, in 1883, Alfred Bardey renewed his contract for three more years. He would, in the end, leave Bardey et Cie. to work for another French exporter, César Tian.

And he was to turn to trading of a different sort. He ran guns for King Menelik II of Shewa, helping him conquer the province of Harar. Rimbaud, who knew the region well by then, thought that aiding Menelik would be a reasonably easy way to make money. He was wrong: Menelik cheated him of most of his profits.

By the time he began working for César Tian, he arguably knew more about Ethiopian coffee than any European alive and, albeit inadvertently, had done much to further France's intimacy with the select coffee of Harar. In the late 1880's, Paul Verlaine, out of jail and back in Paris, published Rimbaud's *Illuminations.* Verlaine had tried unavailingly to contact Rimbaud and assumed that he was dead, and the book was attributed to "the late Arthur Rimbaud." Thus there may have been a moment in a Paris café when someone was reading Rimbaud's *Illuminations* while drinking a cup of Ethiopian Harar that the poet himself had traded for and exported. Such are the hidden ironies of life.

GOODMAN; D. AITORIESE

> Though he was aware that some of his poetry had been published, he had not a clue of the magnitude of his eventual, posthumous fame.

Frustrated in his effort to accumulate a fortune, Rimbaud left Harar for the last time on April 7, 1891, his leg terribly swollen by a synovial tumor. For 15 agonizing days, his leg hurting "at every step," he was hand-carried in a covered litter to the coast. It was almost equally agonizing for him to pay the porters, parting with some of the money he had slavishly devoted himself to earning during hard years in Africa. Beyond the capacities of local treatment, he was put on a steamer for Marseille, and there was taken to the Hospital of the Immaculate Conception. Near death, he still worried about the expense!

His tumorous leg was amputated in May, and his despair soon increased. "I begin to understand," he wrote to his sister Isabelle, "that crutches, wooden legs and prostheses are just jokes. All you get from them is the ability to drag yourself miserably around without being able to actually do anything. And just when I had decided to return to France this summer and get married! Goodbye marriage, goodbye family, goodbye future! My life is over; I'm nothing but an immobile lump...."

His cancer widespread, Rimbaud died on November 10, 1891, alone and miserable. Though he was by then aware that some of his poetry had been published and had attracted attention, he had not a clue of the magnitude of his eventual, posthumous fame. Would he have cared? In one of his last letters, also written to his sister, he wrote, "Our life is a misery, an endless misery! Why do we exist?"

He was 37. ⊕

Richard Goodman is the author of *French Dirt: The Story of a Garden in the South of France,* to be published in a 10th-anniversary edition by Algonquin Books in Spring 2002. **Norman MacDonald** (kingmacdonald@wxs.nl), a Canadian illustrator, is a frequent contributor to *Saudi Aramco World*. He lives in Amsterdam.

Related articles have appeared in these past issues of *Aramco World* and *Saudi Aramco World*:

Origins of Coffee: S/O 73
Coffee in Yemen: S/O 97

Saudi Arabia:

With these images I have attempted to convey my sense of the desert as a unifying element throughout the centuries and to demonstrate visually how—through its majestic beauty, vast emptiness, and physical challenges—it has helped form the values we find throughout this part of the world today: inner strength, personal courage, warmth of hospitality, and a powerful devotion to God and family. No matter how dramatically the most recent gift of the the desert, the discovery of oil, has propelled Saudi Arabia into the twenty-first century, these values remain and endure.

One cannot become immersed in the culture of the Middle East without being aware of its long tradition of poetry. I became convinced that a selection of the sentiments so poignantly expressed in both oral and written poetry—from pre-Islamic times to modern days, from Bedouin bards still living in the desert to poets now residing in urban areas—would complement and enhance what I had captured with my camera.

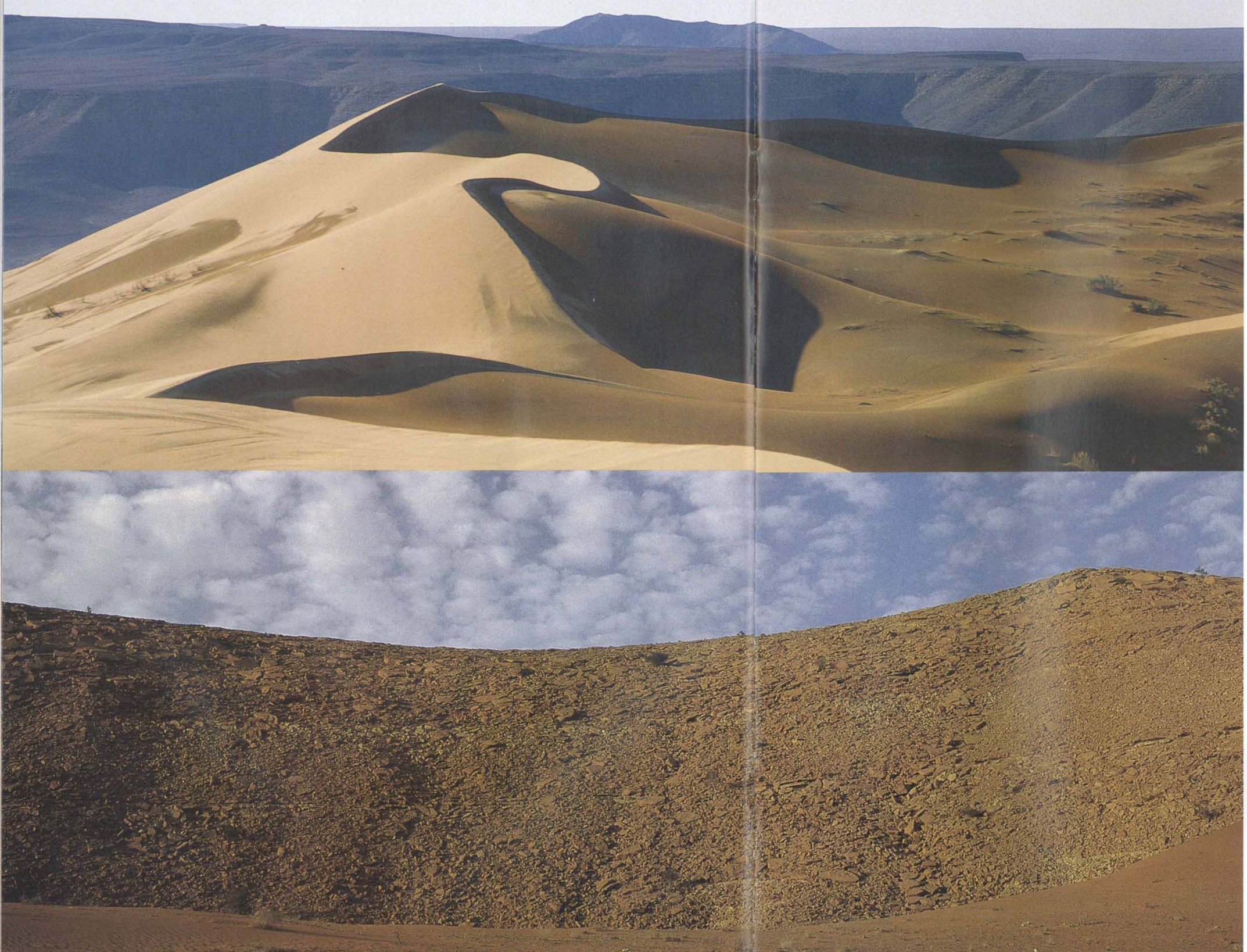
—Isabel Cutler

The sea recedes, only the shells remain / at the bottom of the earth / wind after wind / redistributes the red sands.

MAHMOUD AL-BURAIKAN
FROM "TALE OF THE ASSYRIAN STATUE"

The Desert

Photographed by Isabel Cutler



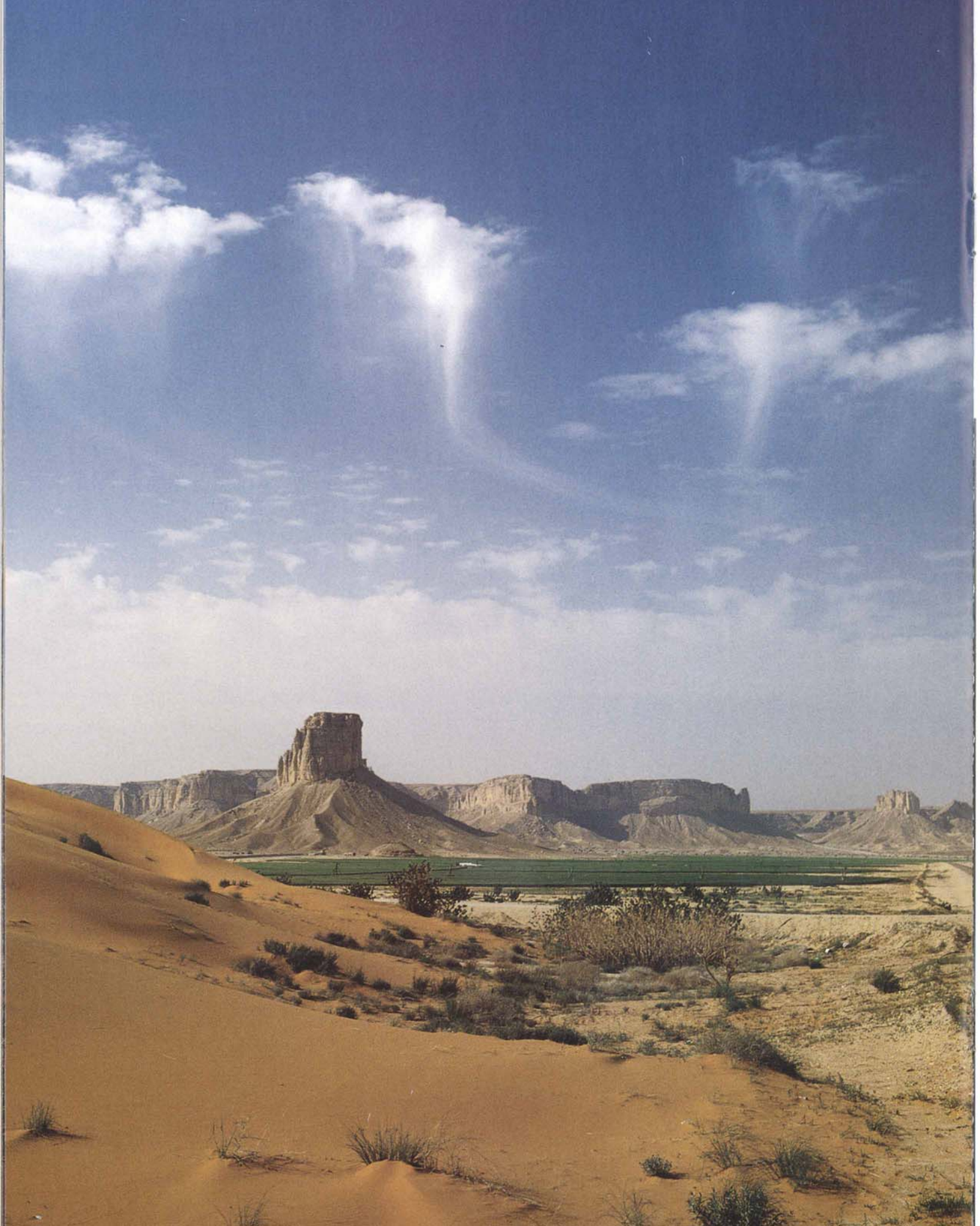
I've searched the world
without finding land more barren,
love more pure,
or rage more fierce than yours.

I came back to you, oh desert,
sea-spray on my face;
in my mind, a mirage of tears,
a shadow moving in the sea
before dawn
and a golden flash of braided hair.
On my lips, two lines of poetry—
a song without echo.

...

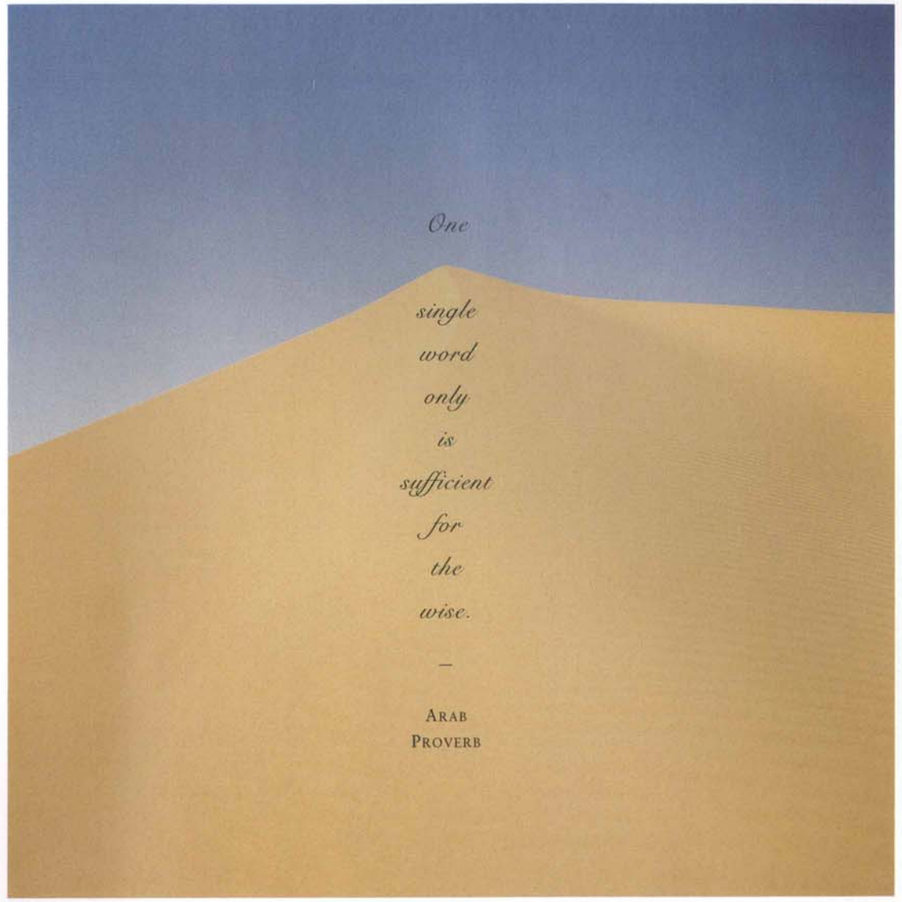
I came back to you, oh desert,
I've thrown away my quiver
and ceased wandering.
I dally in your night-web
of mystery,
breathing on the soft winds
of the Najd
the fragrance of Araar.
In you I live for poetry and moons.

GHAZI AL-GOSAIBI
"OH DESERT"



I best know the sun
of my own country.

ARAB PROVERB



One

single
word
only
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sufficient
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—

ARAB
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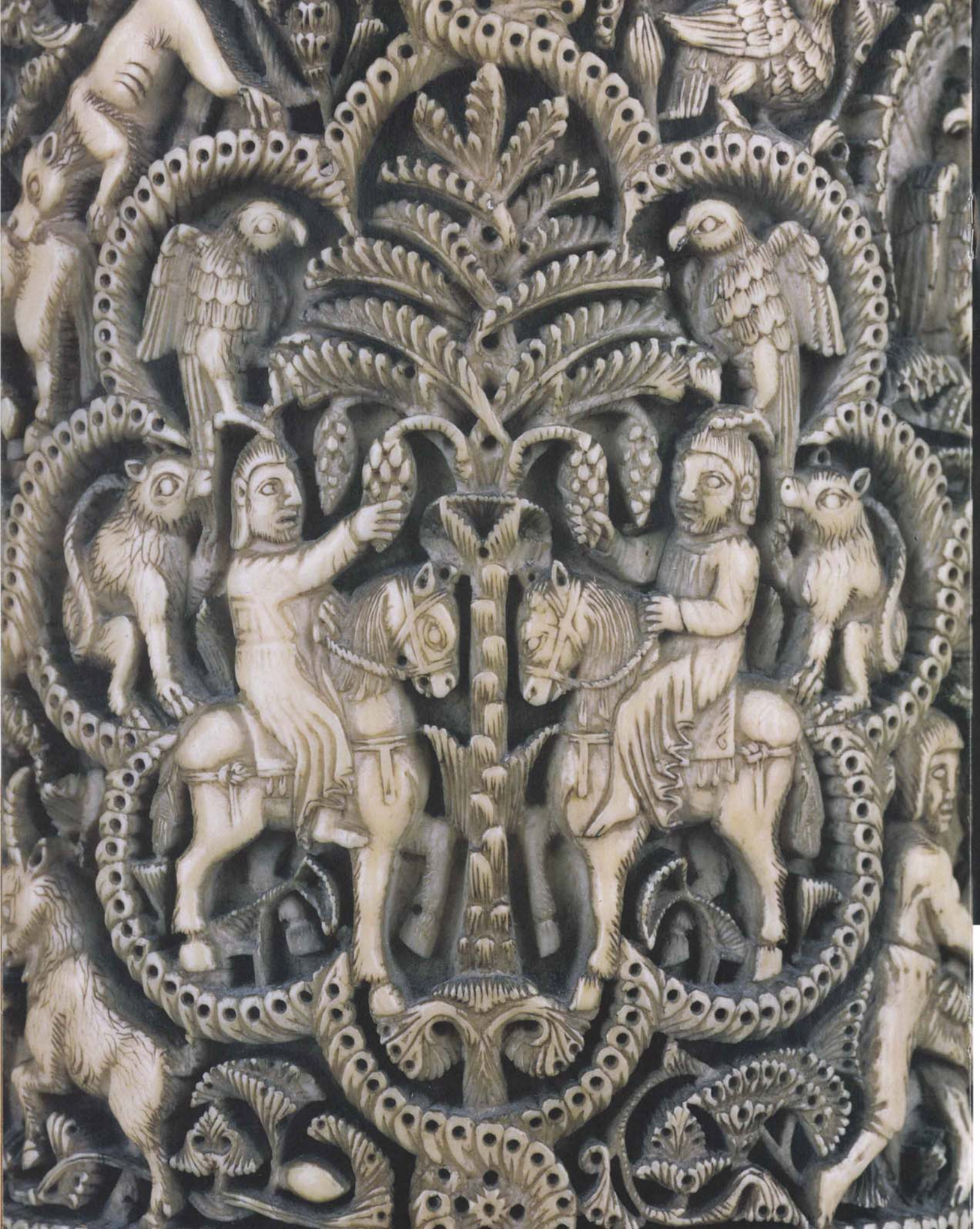
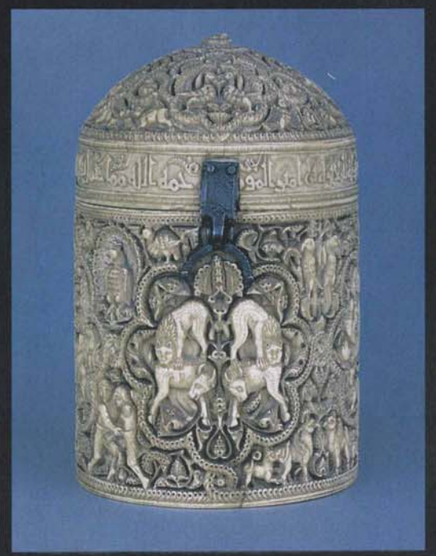
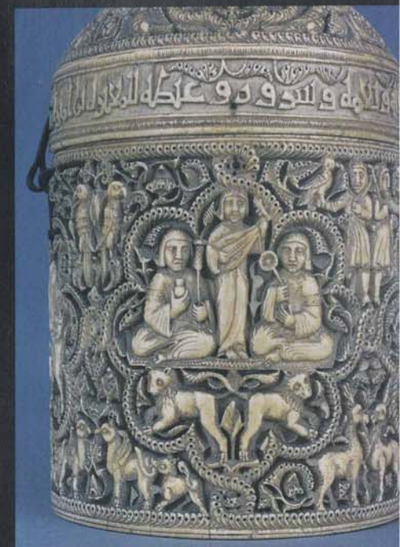
Isabel Cutler has spent much of the last 25 years living and traveling in the Middle East as a photographer specializing in landscapes and portraits.

Excerpted with permission from *Mysteries of the Desert: A View of Saudi Arabia*, by Isabel Cutler, Rizzoli International Publications, Inc., August 2001. ISBN 0-8478-2359-8, $55 (hb).

The Ivories of Al-Andalus







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Written by Sheila S. Blair
Photographs courtesy of the Metropolitan Museum of Art (MMA)

It is the hardest of all organic materials, and yet, with relative ease, ivory can be sawn, drilled, filed, scraped, buffed to a high polish and even inlaid with glass, stone or gems. Its great density invites carving and engraving of the most meticulous order, and the results are luminous, even at times translucent. Adding to its allure, ivory can feel warm to the touch.

For these reasons, ivory has been prized since the earliest times and in many lands. Objects of ivory filled the ancient treasuries of Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece and Rome. Assyrian annals list ivory beds, couches, chairs and tables among the booty brought back from Nimrud. Egyptians worked ivory into jewelry and game pieces, and the treasure found in Tutankhamun's tomb included a carved ivory headrest unique in Egyptian art—as well as a wooden chest whose ivory panels display almost every carving technique known today. And adding to its value, there was always only one source for the precious material: elephants, whose homes in Africa and India lay weeks' or months' difficult distance from royal workshops.

The Arab conquest of North Africa in the late seventh century apparently disrupted an otherwise fairly steady ivory trade in that region, but in the ninth century the Aghlabid rulers of Tunisia reopened the trans-Saharan trade routes. Rulers of Byzantium and southern Europe began to commission splendid ivory book covers, portable ivory altars and icons. Their Muslim contemporaries in al-Andalus (Muslim Spain) produced work of no less splendor: From them have come to us a group of some 30 boxes, all made within the 100 years between 950 and 1050; they are some of the finest of all the ivories of the Middle Ages.

Like their better-known European counterparts, these boxes are prized for their decoration. Most of the surfaces are covered by a dense vegetal pattern carved in relief on a smooth background. Small holes indicate they were once set with jewels or gold studs, and nearly all sport twisting bands that frame scenes of court ritual, combat or the hunt.

What makes the ivories carved in al-Andalus so significant as historical objects is their Arabic inscriptions. Complete pieces usually have (or had) an inscription carved around the lower edge of the lid in angular Kufic script; it often tells us the name of the artist and the place, the year and for whom the box was made. The inscriptions, and thus the boxes, form part of the historical chronicle of Islamic Spain.

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The Umayyad chamberlain 'Abd al-Malik commissioned this shoebox-sized casket, assembled from 19 ivory panels. It was completed in Córdoba in AD 1004 or 1005. The inscription around the lid refers to 'Abd al-Malik, defender of León against the Christians, as "sword of the state." Museo de Navarra/MMA

Previous spread: **The pyxis of al-Mughira, with its unique domed cover, was carved in the ivory workshop of 'Abd al-Rahman III at Madinat al-Zahra in AD 968. Four eight-lobed medallions and a profusion of birds, beasts, plants and people decorate its sides. In one medallion, lions attack bulls; in another, a lutenist stands on a lion-supported throne flanked by two youths. In a third, riders pick dates while their hunting cheetahs snatch at birds.** Jean-Pierre Lagiewski/Musée du Louvre/MMA

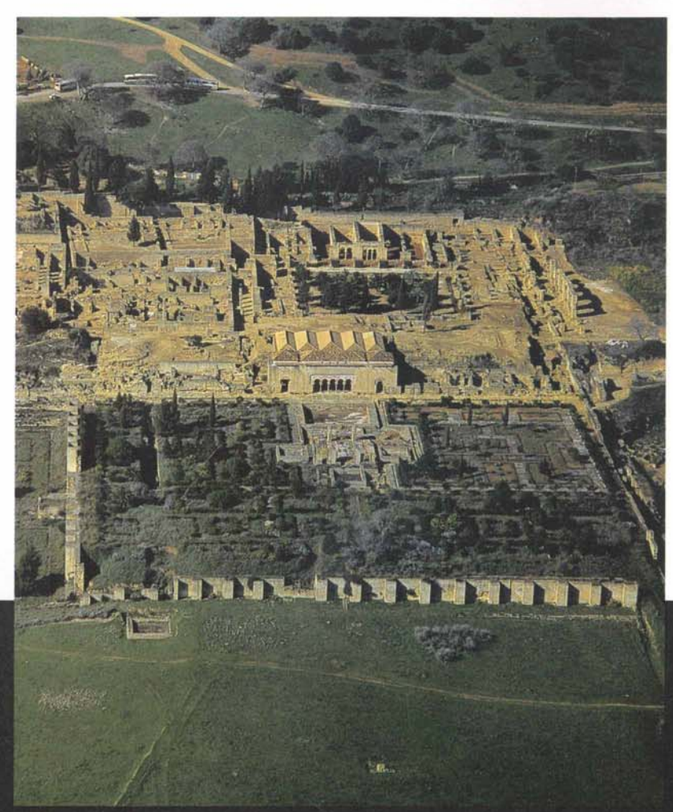
They were constructed in two ways. One type is carved in the round, from a single cylinder cut from the tusk. The size and shape of the tusk restricts the size of the piece, and hence most are small, typically measuring 18 cm (7½") high by 10 cm (4") in diameter. Many have domed lids. Scholars often refer to such a box as a *pyxis* (plural: *pyxides*), from the Greek word for a covered container used to store salves and toiletries.

Pyxides, however, were an expensive way to use a tusk, for all the ivory from the inside was carved out and wasted, and the size of the tusk limited the size of the container. To avoid this restriction, carvers preferred to saw the tusk into rectangular plaques, which were then fitted together on a wooden frame to form a box. These boxes are usually rectangular, and they have either flat or pitched lids. Some are small, like the pyxides, measuring 10 to 12 cm (4–5") across the front, but artisans also used this technique to construct much larger boxes. A splendid one now in Pamplona, for example, is composed of 19 panels and is the size of a large shoe box: 24 x 38 x 24 centimeters (9½ x 15 x 9½"). These rectangular boxes are often called caskets, because they resemble the containers used to store jewelry, unguents, spices, and other valuable substances—and, indeed, an inscription on a pyxis in the collection of the Hispanic Society of America mentions musk, camphor, and ambergris, presumably in reference to the potential contents of the box.

As far as we know, the boxes were first made in al-Andalus in the mid-10th century, at the height of the Umayyad dynasty. The earliest examples date to the last years of the reign of 'Abd al-Rahman III, generally regarded as the greatest Umayyad ruler. He was the first to claim the titles of caliph and "commander of the faithful," and he was known by the epithet al-Nasir, "the victorious." During his remarkably long and prosperous reign, from 912 to 961, Córdoba became the largest city in Europe. To accommodate its burgeoning Muslim population, he expanded the courtyard of the Great Mosque and built the immense minaret that still stands today, encased in the masonry that transformed it into a bell tower. The power and prestige of his court is epitomized by Madinat al-Zahra, the enormous palace-city he founded in 936 on a mountainside five kilometers (3 mi) west of Córdoba. Though most of the complex is in ruins today, it once housed, among much else, a royal workshop for ivory.

Fine ivory caskets continued to be made under 'Abd al-Rahman's son and successor, al-Hakam II (961–976), and it was in al-Hakam's first years as caliph that the Great Mosque of Córdoba received its most spectacular addition. The covered area was extended to the south, almost to the banks of the Guadalquivir River. The entrance to the addition and the bays in front of and beside the new *mihrab*, or prayer niche, were set off with elaborate screens that supported domes. Revetted in gold mosaics, these bays housed an elaborate and

An inscription, in angular Kufic script, often tells us the name of the artist who carved the piece and the patron who commissioned it, as well as the place and the year it was made. The inscriptions make these ivories valuable historical documents as well as magnificent works of art.



The palace-city of Madinat al-Zahra represented the apogee of the luxury arts of the Umayyads. It dazzled visitors with its elaborate court ceremonies held among its myriad courts, gardens, pavilions and terraces. Among its royal workshops was one for the carving of ivory. Archivo Fotográfico Oronoz

The *mihrab*, or prayer niche, of the Great Mosque of Córdoba is often cited as one of the high-water marks of western Islamic art. The gold mosaics of its horseshoe arch—like the ones found in the Great Mosque in Damascus—were crafted by Byzantine artists. Archivo Fotográfico Oronoz

Al-Mughira was the younger brother of 'Abd al-Rahman's designated heir, but analysis of the inscription on the pyxis made for him indicates that he may have held hopes of succeeding to the throne himself.

costly *minbar*, or pulpit, inlaid with ivory, red and yellow sandalwood, ebony, and Indian wood. Unfortunately, we know it today only from written descriptions.

Although a few ivories, inscribed with generic good wishes and decorated in a routine fashion with geometric or floral motifs, seem to have been made for sale on the open market, the main recipients of these carved ivories were court officials and members of the caliphal household. A damaged but still beautiful pyxis in the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, for example, was made in 970 for the prefect of police. The finest piece to survive is the pyxis made in 968 for al-Mughira, son of 'Abd al-Rahman III and younger brother of al-Hakam II. Although couched in standard royal terms, the inscription around the lid does not mention al-Hakam or the office of caliph, and this unusual omission may signal al-Mughira's hopes of succeeding to the throne should his elderly brother die before producing a male heir.

Ladies of the court were similarly honored: 'Abd al-Rahman's daughter received a small pyxis and an enigmatic cylindrical case thought to have been either a game box—a game like mankala or warri comes to mind—or a cosmetic case. Four other boxes are inscribed with the name of al-Hakam's consort Subh. A Basque from Gascony, she was the mother of his two sons, one of whom died in infancy; the other became his successor. These boxes corroborate extant

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In this medallion, one of 21 adorning the Pamplona casket, a figure on a throne—probably 'Abd al-Malik—is flanked by two attendants, one holding a fly whisk, the other a perfume bottle and a fan. The throne bears the name—Misbah—of the craftsman who carved the panel. Museo de Navarra/MMA

textual descriptions of the roles women played in Islamic Spain as Qur'an copyists, secretaries, teachers and librarians.

Following al-Hakam's death in 976, the succession devolved on persons of lesser rank. By the end of the 10th century, caliphal authority had been supplanted by that of the chief minister and chamberlain, then Ibn Abi 'Amir, called al-Mansur ("to whom victory has been granted"). With the dissolution of caliphal authority, the office of chamberlain became hereditary, and al-Mansur was succeeded by his son 'Abd al-Malik, who around 1005 commissioned two superb ivories. One is a pyxis now in the treasury of Braga Cathedral in Portugal; the other is the magnificent casket now in Pamplona. The inscription around the lid of the latter imitates the wording reserved for the caliph on earlier pieces, but names the chamberlain instead, and lauds him as "sword of the state," the title he received for stopping the Christian advance at León that summer. The medallion on the front right of the casket shows a figure seated on a lion throne and flanked by two attendants, one of whom holds a perfume sprinkler and a woven fan, the other a fly-wisk. Some scholars have interpreted the figure as the nominally reigning Hisham II, but several features suggest that it actually represents 'Abd al-Malik, who had usurped caliphal prerogative in commissioning carved ivories.

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This small casket and the similarly decorated hinged cylindrical box opposite**—probably a compact mankala game-board—were carved at Madinat al-Zahra for a daughter of 'Abd al-Rahman III about the time of his death in 961. The lady's name is unknown, and these two objects are the only evidence of her existence.** Victoria and Albert Museum **(casket);** Sheldon Collins/Museo de Burgos/MMA **(cylindrical box)**

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The casket of al-Hisham, made of wood clad in repoussé silver, includes a non-functional strap across the lid, a visual reference to ivory caskets that was perhaps intended to invoke their prestige and underline the importance of the 10-year-old heir apparent. Tesoro de la Catedral de Gerona/Archivo Fotográfico Oronoz

'Abd al-Malik's power is clear from his control of the caliphal workshops. According to the inscription around its lid, the Pamplona casket was made under the supervision of al-Zuhayr, the chief page—and he is identified not as the servant of the caliph, but as the servant of the chamberlain.

Generally, few artisans in medieval times signed their work. Nonetheless, many of the ivories are inconspicuously signed, demonstrating both the high status of ivory carvers and their wish to show the proper humility before their patrons. Khalaf, the only carver to sign any of the ivories made in the early period, tucked his signature away on the back of his work, between the knuckles of the hinge. Misbah, carver of the Pamplona casket, incised his name in tiny Arabic letters on the platform of the throne, beneath the chamberlain's feet. He was part of a team of craftsmen; the team leader, Faraj, signed his name on the calf of the right-hand lion-slayer on the right side of the lid, and at least three other carvers incised their names elsewhere on the casket. To judge from the names, all of which are auspicious attributes such as "light," "joy" and "divine guidance," these carvers were likely 'Abd al-Malik's slaves, for free-born Muslims would have had names that referred to their family lineages.

The size of the casket further confirms the chamberlain 'Abd al-Malik's claim to caliphal authority. Although it is the first such large casket to survive, the Pamplona casket was not the first to have been built on such a scale. A generation before, a silver casket had been made for the 10-year-old prince Hisham to mark his designation as heir-apparent. Decorated with gilt and a black organic material, Hisham's casket is clearly modeled on an ivory prototype, for it has a strap over the lid hammered from the same sheet of metal as the rest of the lid. This strap is useless on a silver box, but it copies the metal straps that held together wooden and ivory boxes like the one later made for 'Abd al-Malik. Too large for cosmetics and toiletries, caskets like these may have been used to hold regalia and other accouterments of power.

Such a hypothesis is reinforced by ivories made in the second quarter of the 11th century. By this time, the Umayyad chamberlains too had lost control, and when the dynasty itself collapsed in 1031, Muslim Spain fell into a period of political fragmentation, with at least 39 local chiefs and ethnic groups holding control in different regions. One of these lines of so-called Party Kings (known in Arabic as *muluk al-tawa'if* and in Spanish as *reyes de taifas*) was the Dhu 'l-Nunids, a Berber family based in Toledo. They assumed the dignities of the Umayyad court, and to bolster their claim to be the successors to the caliphate, they too ordered ivory boxes. Ismail al-Zafir, the founder of the Dhu 'l-Nunid line, is named on a box now in Burgos. His grandson, Yahya al-Ma'mun, governor of Cuenca and heir-apparent to the throne of Toledo, is named on three other pieces, including a large box made in 1049 or 1050.

Their inscriptions tell us that these ivories were not made in or even near Córdoba, but rather at Cuenca, which lies 300 kilometers (185 mi) to the northeast. Though large, these Dhu 'l-Nunid ivories are not nearly as fine as those made for the Umayyads: The carving is stiff and flat, and the imagery is limited. Two large caskets are signed by two members of the Zayyan family; we know nothing about them, but, judging from the workmanship, they were second-rate craftsmen who had emigrated to the provinces. The more talented artisans continued to work in Córdoba at least until the 12th century, for we know that magnificent works continued to be produced in that city in a variety of media, such as the inlaid minbar installed in the Kutubiyya Mosque in Marrakesh.

No ivory objects from later than 1050 have survived to our time, and even the survival of the 30 extant ivories from the previous century may be the result of sheer historical luck. The Christians who reconquered the Iberian Peninsula, it turned out, prized the ivories as much as their Muslim patrons had, and, when taken as booty, the ivories were often donated to churches and monasteries, where they were used as reliquaries. Catalan mercenaries, for example, probably looted the large casket made for 'Abd al-Malik during the sack of Córdoba in 1010. They took it to the Benedictine monastery of San Salvador de Leyre in the Pyrenees, where it was used to store relics. Later it was transferred to the church of Santa María de Sangüesa, and still later it was moved to the treasury of the cathedral in Pamplona, where it is preserved today.

Similarly, Fernán González, count of Castile, is said to have presented the pyxis now in Burgos to the monastery of Santo Domingo at Silos, where it too became a reliquary. Thus, ironically, this high art of the Muslim court was preserved because of its appropriation by Christians. In fact, the process was not

These works of art were treasured as much by the Christians who looted them as by the Muslim princes who had commissioned them.

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actual size

Carved in 1026 for Ismail al-Zafir, one of the Party Kings who commissioned ivory caskets to support their claims to be successors to the Umayyads, this box was later converted into a reliquary with the addition of enameled copper plaques showing Christian imagery. Museo de Burgos/MMA

<
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actual size

The Palencia casket (left, and detail opposite), **produced in the provincial ivory workshop at Cuenca in 1049, is adorned with courtly images—hunting scenes, griffins, lions and gazelles—that nonetheless lack the skill and confidence that characterized earlier Córdoban work.** Museo Arqueológico Nacional, Madrid/MMA

>
≈ 100%
actual size

limited to small ivory caskets, but also saved some great Islamic masterpieces: The mosque of Córdoba itself was converted to a cathedral; minarets like the Giralda at Seville were turned into bell towers, and entire complexes, such as the Alahambra in Granada, served as palaces for the Christian rulers.

Sometimes the Christians "converted" the iconography of the art works as well as their function. For example, around 1150, when the casket made for the Dhu 'l-Nunid Ismail al-Zafir was converted into a reliquary, a craftsman at the abbey at Burgos added copper plaques decorated with enamel. The plaque along one of the short sides of the casket shows Santo Domingo in a Benedictine mantle flanked by two angels. Similarly, the casket made for Yahya al-Ma'mun was retrofitted with gilded copper strips decorated with enamels while it was in the treasury of the cathedral at Palencia, in northern Spain.

Today, a millennium after they were made, these ivories are no less treasured. At the turn of the 20th century, a Valencian craftsman named Don Francisco Pallás y Puig made fine copies of some of the boxes and sold them at ordinary commercial prices as imitations; after passing through several hands, however, some began to be taken as originals, and several are now in museums.

Most recently, a rectangular ivory casket was found in a country house in Yorkshire, England. Decorated with a frieze of hunters and animals, it is inscribed around the lid with blessings to an anonymous owner and a *hijri* date that corresponds to December 1003 or January 1004. Not as finely carved as contemporary objects such as the Pamplona casket made for 'Abd al-Malik, it is stained black and partially defaced with brass mounts. Its rectangular shape, which resembles contemporary metal pen boxes, and its odd inscription, with unusual spellings, are anomalous among all the extant ivories from al-Andalus. Nonetheless, it fetched more than £606,000 ($1,035,000) at auction in 1998. If the piece is authentic, art historians hope to be able to work out how it fits into this extraordinary group of treasures.

From these few, precious masterpieces, there is much history yet to be learned.

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≈ 40%
actual size

Found in a Yorkshire country house and auctioned in 1998 for more than £606,000, this unusual ivory box appears to have been carved in al-Andalus nearly a thousand years ago. Sotheby's

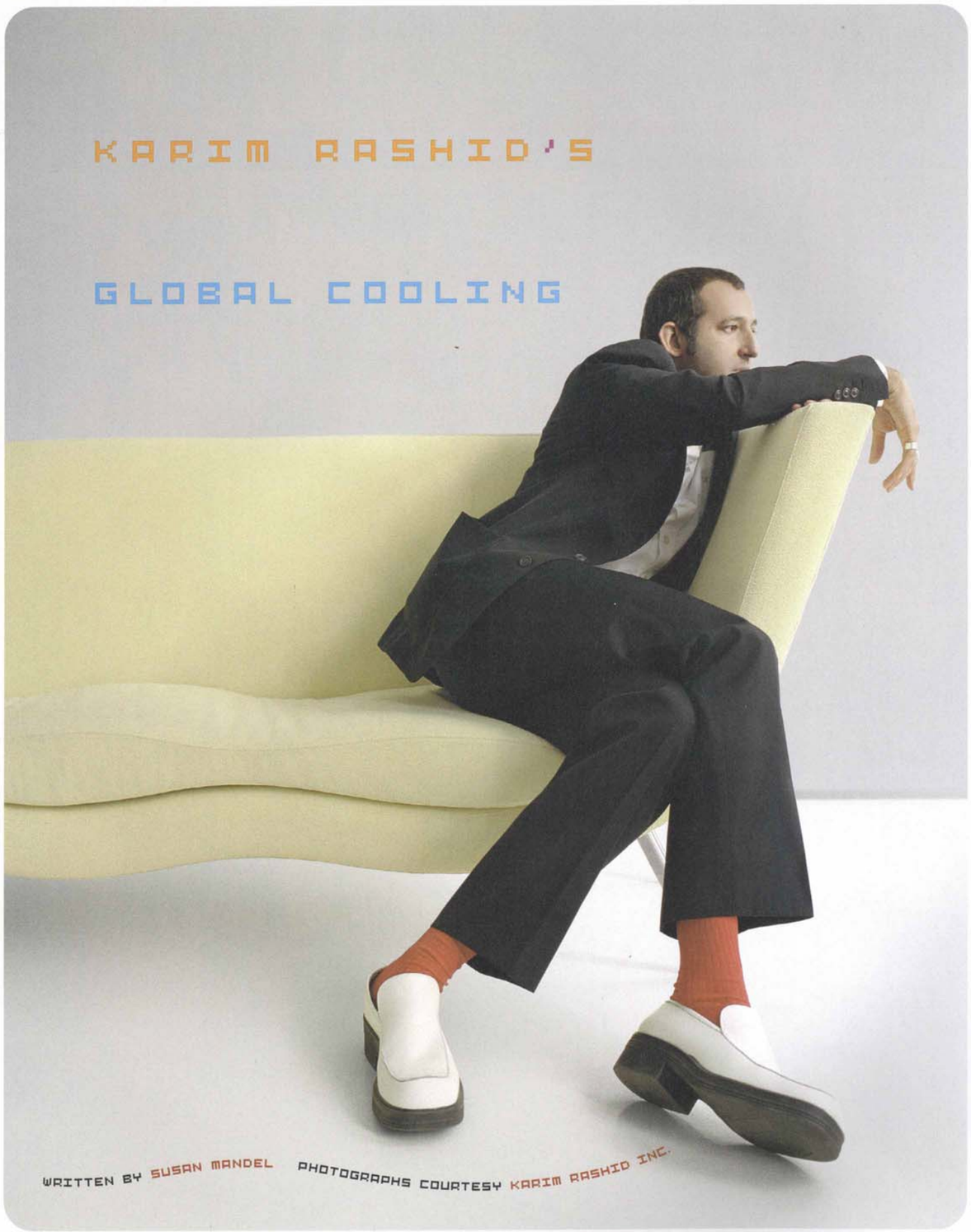
Shelia S. Blair, Norma Jean Calderwood University Professor of Islamic and Asian Art at Boston College, writes on all aspects of Islamic art. Her most recent book, co-authored with Jonathan Bloom, is *Islam: A Thousand Years of Faith and Power* (2000, TV Books). She is working on a survey of Islamic calligraphy.

Kyle Pakka carried out photo research for this article.

Related articles have appeared in these past issues of *Aramco World* and *Saudi Aramco World*:

Art of Muslim Spain: S/O 92
The Giralda: J/F 93
Kutubiyya minbar: M/J 98

KARIM RASHID'S GLOBAL COOLING



WRITTEN BY SUSAN MANDEL PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY KARIM RASHID INC.

Eight years ago, Karim Rashid was sleeping on the floor of his brother's New York apartment while peddling his industrial design portfolio from office to unreceptive office. That didn't last long, though: Two years later, the Museum of Modern Art included a couple of his pieces in a show called "Mutant Materials in Contemporary Design." Today he's spending the nights—when he's not on a job or lecturing—in his own sleek loft, recently featured in *Metropolitan Home*. He is, quite simply, the top product designer in North America. The press has noticed, and articles about Rashid have appeared in more than 30 magazines, arguably making him the 21st century's first designer celebrity. All this fits his ambitions fine, because at 41, Rashid has made it clear he's after more than a good name: He's out to dominate the world of modern design.

Orange turns up frequently in Rashid's designs and on his person: At 12, he painted his entire bedroom orange. Above: **Surfaise Long, upholstered chaise with metal frame, built-in** LCD **monitor and computer connection, 2001.** Insets, from left: **Hourglass Cufflinks, Acme Studio, 2001; Garbo Garbage Can, injection-molded polypropylene, various colors, Umbra, 1996; conceptual rendering for a wireless telephone.**

SANDRA GERING GALLERY; OPPOSITE: GARBO: ILAN RUBIN

"His work is amazing, terrific; he's one of the hottest and most exciting young designers working in the field today," says Marilyn Symmes, a curator at the Smithsonian's Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum in New York.

At an appearance in Washington, D.C. this past spring, Rashid dressed in black and wore oversized, mod, plastic-framed glasses, bright-orange running shoes and two immense blob-like silver rings—he has designed several products on the "blob" theme. He looked... well, very cool.

He calls his design style "sensuous minimalism." It combines clean and simple lines with soft, rounded, organic, even biomorphic, shapes, resulting in objects that are beautiful and interesting despite their lack of ornamentation. "His designs are always fun. Even though he draws a lot of inspiration from other design eras, he reinterprets them in a very futuristic way," says

Paul Rowan, vice president of Umbra, a Toronto home-accessories manufacturing company that was one of Rashid's first clients.

As a product designer, Rashid creates the stuff of daily domestic life: sofas, chairs, candlesticks, table lamps, CD players, perfume bottles, cigarette lighters and, recently, rooms to put all that stuff in. His designs reflect his philosophy of living completely in the present. "I want to develop things that are about this day and age in which we live, because the reality is, we don't live in the past. If I go out tomorrow to buy a coffee table for my home, why isn't that coffee table a kind of celebration, why isn't it in a relationship to this day and age?" Rashid asks.

His shapes are possible because he creates his designs on computers. He's enamored of technology and how its efficiencies reduce manufacturing costs, allowing him to be a designer for the middle-brow masses, not just for habitués of high-end galleries. It takes only $8.00 to buy his best-selling product so far, a curvaceous translucent-plastic wastebasket named Garbo, introduced by Umbra in 1996 and sold throughout North America, Europe, Asia and the Middle East. Garbo is "not just a garbage can," Rowan says. "It's a beautiful vessel that's used in a variety of ways, from champagne bucket to child's toy container."

Underlying Rashid's tremendous talent is no less passion. "I do what I do because I want to. It's in my DNA. It's a personal obsession," he says. He visited 100 companies in his first year or so and only two took him on: Umbra and Nambé, a manufacturer of decorative tableware and accessories in Santa Fe, New Mexico. He still travels a lot, and last year he spent some 200 nights in hotels meeting with clients, attending trade shows, giving lectures and visiting manufacturers to learn about new production methods. "He has a very deep knowledge of industrial processes and materials and techniques, and his product design grows out of that," says Kathryn Hiesinger, curator of decorative arts and design at the Philadelphia Museum of Art.

On the road or in New York, Rashid is a blur of multi-tasking motion. He puts in more than 70 hours a week, including weekends, and he rarely takes time off. His brain seems to operate in overdrive, and he is overflowing with observations and opinions about design, all of which he imparts with keen intelligence and the evangelical, self-promoting zeal that is a key to his current popularity: Who else can get people excited about waste baskets, lobby chairs and the feel of a 99-cent cigarette lighter? Last year he ended a decade of teaching at three top US design schools to finish up his first book, *Karim Rashid: I Want to Change the World*, released in July.

Rashid's roots are far from the New York scene. He was born in Cairo to an Egyptian father and a British mother. The family left Egypt when he was two years old and later settled in Toronto, where his father, an artist by training, worked as a set designer for the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. He encouraged his son's interest in art and design. At 12, the younger Rashid painted his bedroom orange. "My mom was upset, but my father loved it," he says.

He earned industrial design degrees from Carleton University in Ottawa, attended graduate school in Naples, and worked in Milan for a year before returning to Toronto to work for KAN Industrial Designers. He started at the bottom, making things like space heaters and a drug-detection machine used by customs officials. His first big seller was a plastic snow shovel.

He followed his elder brother Hani, an architect, to New York and opened Karim Rashid Inc. in 1993. In the years following the display at the Museum of Modern Art, more than 70 of his designs have been added to permanent collections in museums worldwide. His client list includes household names—Sony, Armani, Tommy Hilfiger and Estée Lauder—and some surprises: ConEdison, Union Carbide and the Canadian postal service. These days, he's working hardest on a new frontier, interior decorating, starting with hotels in Los Angeles and New York; he's also doing architecture for another hotel in Athens.

Interestingly, Rashid does not consider himself successful—yet. "I think I am just beginning," he says. If that's the case, his future accomplishments just may include taking over the world. No doubt he'd make it a much cooler place.

Susan Mandel is a freelance writer who lives in Northern Virginia.

www.karimrashid.com

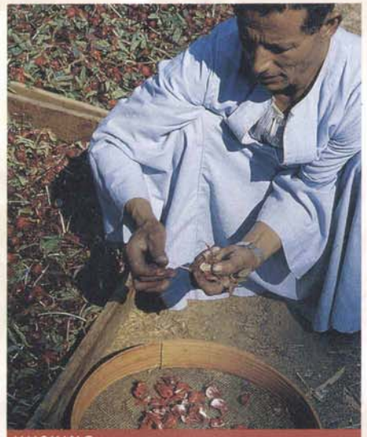
Opposite: **Concept rendering for Oishii, a Japanese restaurant in Philadelphia.** This page, from top left: **Pens, Acme Studio, 2000; Wind Lamp, polished metal with fabric, Nambé Lighting, 2001; New Move Glassware, Leonardo, 1999; CRT-TV, concept rendering for a television; Flare Candlesticks, polished metal alloy, Nambé Studio, 1994; Sway Can, injection-molded polypropylene, Umbra, 2001; portrait; Wavelength Sofa, cast aluminum legs and arms, upholstered seat and back, Nienkamper, 2000; 100-seater bench with pink neoprene cover for Interieur 2000 in Belgium; concept rendering for Semiramis Hotel, Athens; Q-Chaise, polyester over polyurethane, Umbra, 2000.**

PENS: ILAN RUBIN

The Red Tea of Egypt

HARVESTING

The seed-pods of *Hibiscus sabdariffa* ripen successively from the bottom of the plant's two-meter canes. In Egypt, the harvest takes place late in the year, often in November.



HUSKING

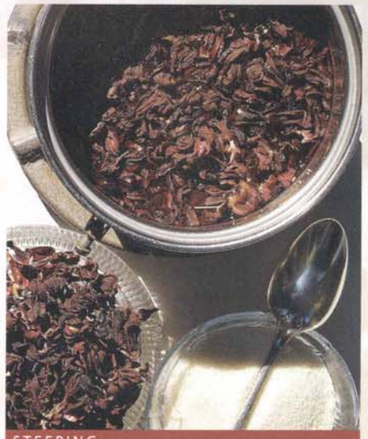
Crisp and juicy at harvest, the succulent calyces are peeled from the seed-pods by hand.

DRYING

After three to four days in the sun, the desiccated calyces, their juices concentrated, are ready to be bagged and taken to market.

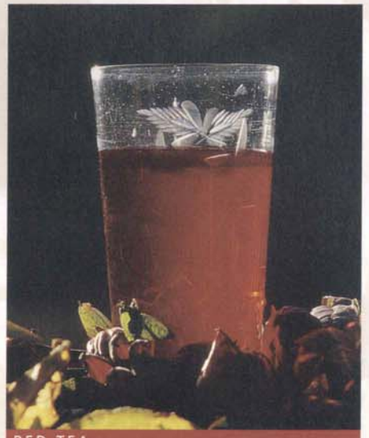
SALAD

Fresh karkady calyces make a crunchy, tart addition to a simple lettuce salad.



STEEPING

Pour cold water over a handful of dried karkady, boil for three minutes, then strain off the liquid. Repeat with less water, adding the second decoction to the first.



RED TEA

Sweeten and drink hot or cold. The taste is tart and refreshing.

WRITTEN AND PHOTOGRAPHED BY JOHN FEENEY

Tart, bright-red hibiscus tea, known in Arabic as *karkady*, has been popular in many lands

for hundreds of years—especially in Africa—and nowhere more so than in Egypt and the Sudan. In most of the West, on the other hand, it remains virtually unknown, though Germany, the West Indies and Mexico are exceptions. But karkady is making inroads: You can sometimes find a handful of it in the trendier sort of US supermarket, enough for a few glasses, done up in small plastic bags and sold for a high price. The Hudson Falafel Restaurant, in New York's Greenwich Village, will serve you a glass of "iced karkady hibiscus" for one dollar, which is reasonable. And it is as an iced summer drink, described as close to cranberry juice in taste, that karkady is at its best.

The karkady plant, *Hibiscus sabdariffa*, is said to have come originally from Southeast Asia. Today, the tall two-meter (6') red cane is grown widely in Egypt and Sudan, as well as in Thailand, China, Tanzania, Mali and Senegal, and it is known by different names in different lands. In the western hemisphere it is grown occasionally in South America but commonly in Mexico, where the tea is one of the most popular summer drinks and the plant is known as *flor de Jamaica*. This name is misleading, for although Jamaica is indeed a karkady-growing island, the drink is not made from the hibiscus flower but from the dried segments of the calyx that surrounds the seed-pod. In Jamaica itself, karkady is called *roselle*, or red sorrel, because, like sorrel, it has a lemony taste. In East Africa it is known as "Sudanese tea," the name deriving from the fact that more karkady is drunk daily in the Sudan than true tea. In Spain it is *quimbombe chino*. The Dutch found karkady in Suriname and called it *zuring*—sorrel again, and related to *zuur*, or "sour." The French, until recently, called it *oseille rouge*, ("red sorrel"), but now it is known there too as *karkady*; the Swiss call it *karkadé* as well.

In 1576, the Flemish botanist Matthias de L'Obel published his observations on karkady in *Plantarum seu stirpium historia*. Karkady seeds are thought to have been brought to the New World by African slaves or slave-traders; the plant was known to be growing in Brazil in the 17th century, in Jamaica in the early 18th century and Guatemala in the early 19th. In 1892, there were two factories in Queensland, Australia producing karkady jam and exporting it to Europe.

In 1895, Australian seeds were brought to California and to Hawaii, and karkady from Jamaican seed was apparently being grown experimentally in Florida before that. A Florida horticulturalist wrote that fresh hibiscus calyces were being sold by the quart in southern Florida in 1907, and they were known as "Florida cranberry" until post-war urban sprawl—punctuated by a hurricane and a freeze—wiped out the commercial karkady gardens about 1960. This was bad luck, for Florida has the main things karkady needs to flourish and take on its wonderful red color: warmth and long hours of summer sunlight. Both, however, are also reliably available in Egypt, where today karkady is grown abundantly and dependably.

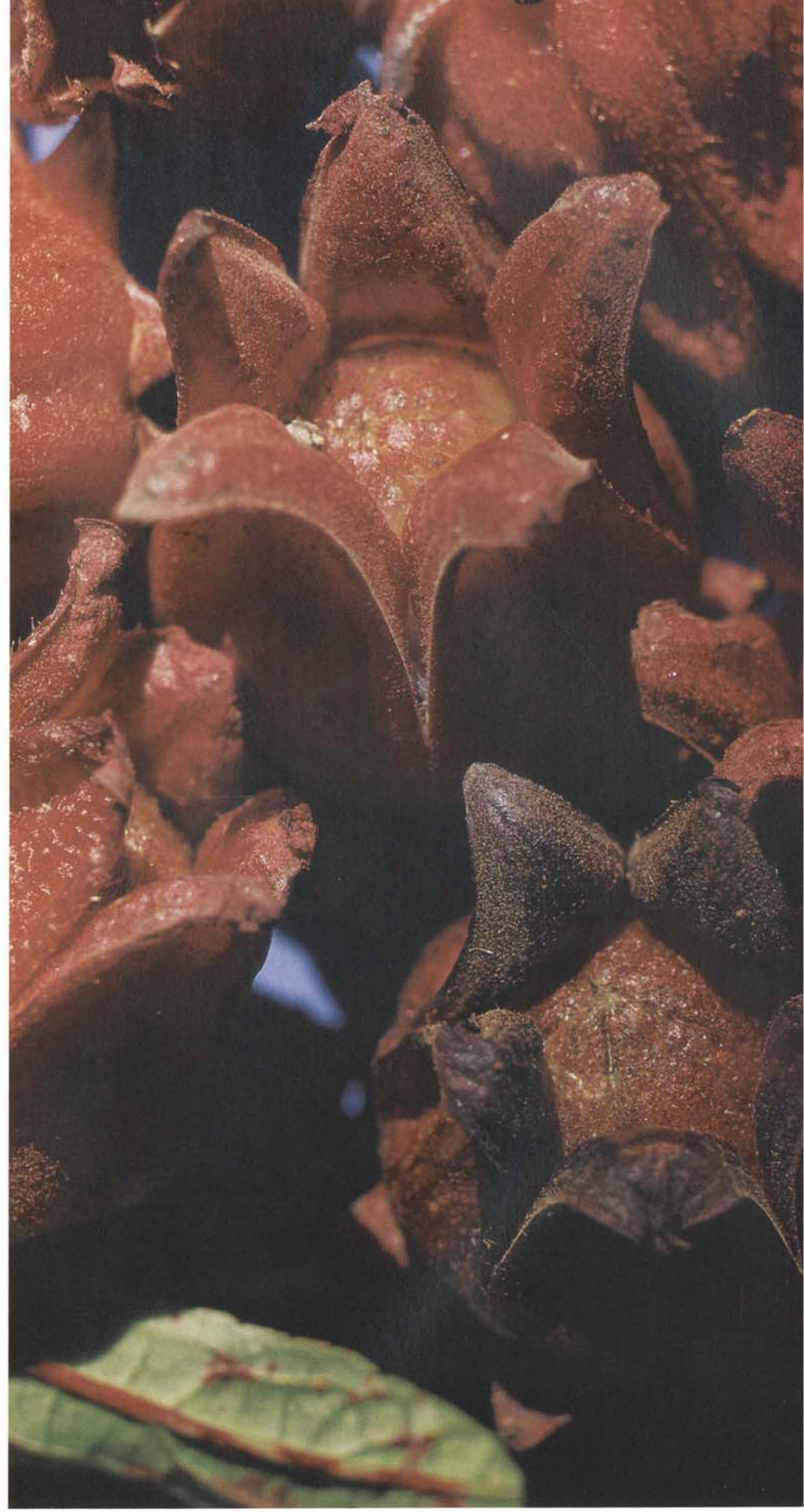
I first heard about karkady more than 40 years ago. Before setting out from my home in Montreal for my first visit to Cairo, a well-traveled friend asked me to see if I could find out about "a drink called karkady" when I got to Egypt. In his young days as a student at the Glasgow School of Fine Arts, he told me, he had had an Egyptian friend who was always longing for a drink of this "karkady," but no one in Glasgow had ever heard of it, and he had always wondered what it was.

Reaching Cairo in mid-summer I surprised everyone by immediately asking for "a glass of karkady." "How did you know about karkady?" they asked. It was a torrid June day and I was hurried out to a nearby café and given my first glass. A few days later I sent off a bulky package of the best quality dried karkady calyces to my friend in Montreal. In those days a kilo (35 oz) cost just 25 piastres; today a kilo of the best "black" karkady costs 16 Egyptian pounds, or about $4.50, at the same humble stalls in the spice market of Old Cairo.

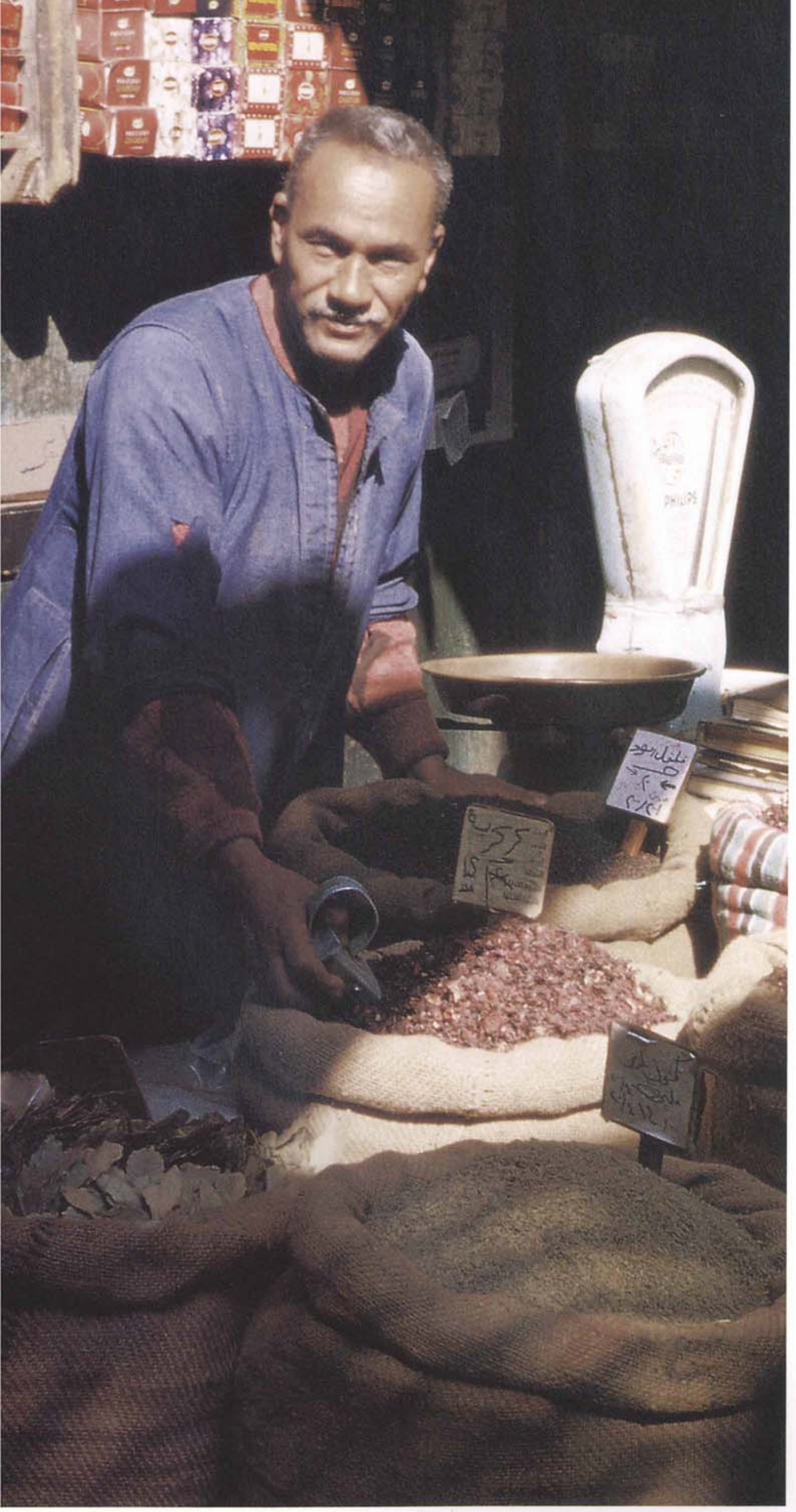
Not long after that introduction, I began serving karkady to my guests in Cairo. Friends from the Ministry of Culture began doing the same, serving glasses of the bright red drink to visitors instead of the more traditional Turkish coffee. Soon afterward karkady took off and many five-star hotels in Cairo began offering "karkady tea" to their guests—iced in summer, hot in winter.

The main Egyptian karkady plantations today are in the dry, hot regions of Upper Egypt around Qena and Aswan and in the oasis of Fayoum; there are some also in parts of the Nile Delta. I have even found small, stunted karkady plants growing wild, the seeds blown by the wind, in the arid sand around the pharaonic temples of Abu Simbel, close to the Egyptian border with Sudan. (Most of Sudan's karkady is grown several hundred kilometers to the south, in the central province of Kordofan.)

The plant is a deep-rooted annual, requiring fertile sandy soil, warmth and plenty of water. It also needs some 13 hours of sunlight during the first four to five months of growth. The tall slender red canes, with green, red-streaked



Like living garnets, plump seed-pods await the removal of their five curling sepals. Karkady came to the New World in the 16th century, and remains popular today, particularly in Jamaica and Mexico. Opposite: **A handful of karkady will make tea for two.**



leaves, grow tall, and when the days grow shorter and the sunshine less intense, small pinkish-white flowers appear at intervals all the way up. Opening at dawn, the flowers wither by mid-day. Once the seeds begin to form, the large, fleshy red calyces—they are not petals—form around the seed-pods, and grow crisp and juicy. It is this outer covering that is gathered and dried to make karkady.

The calyces mature during the long, hot days of summer, and the harvest begins in the autumn. Millions upon millions of seed-pods must be snapped off the canes one by one, by hand, as they mature from the bottom of the canes toward the top. It is tiring, stoop-and-stretch work. Karkady-pickers will tell you the pods break off the canes more easily in the morning than in the afternoon.

Having harvested millions of seed-pods, the workers then strip off tens of millions of the bright red calyces, again by hand, and lay them out to dry in the sun for three to four days. The karkady is then ready for market.

The drink is made in much the same way as a cup of tea. For best results, take a full handful of the dark, almost purple-black, karkady. (The light red kind has less flavor and contains more acid.) Pour on four glasses of cold water. Bring to the boil and simmer for three minutes. Strain off what is now a bright red liquid. Barely cover the calyces again with fresh cold water and give them another three-minute boil to extract all you can. Add this to the tea from the first boil. Add sugar to taste, probably about a tablespoon to each glass. (The boiled husks, by now completely sterilized, make an

A kilogram (35 oz) of the most richly flavorful, nearly black karkady costs 16 Egyptian pounds, or about $4.50, in the spice market of Old Cairo. This paler variety (center) **is priced at 12 pounds.**

Karkady is surely one of the Earth's "wonder plants."

excellent substitute for sphagnum moss in the garden.)

Or, if you have time, you might try making karkady tea the Sudanese way, similar to American "sun tea." Soak the dried karkady in cold water for two days and then, without any boiling, strain off the liquid. This method, the Sudanese say, extracts a fuller flavor, and in my experience they tend to be right; however, you have to plan your karkady-drinking well ahead of time.

Below is my own recipe for a "Karkady Spectacular," suitable for serving on such days as the end of Ramadan or Christmas and New Year's Day—all occasions when the glorious red color of the drink fits the festivity. During the Islamic fasting month of Ramadan, many Egyptian families now break their day-long fast at sunset with glasses of karkady instead of the traditional apricot drink, *gamar al-din*.

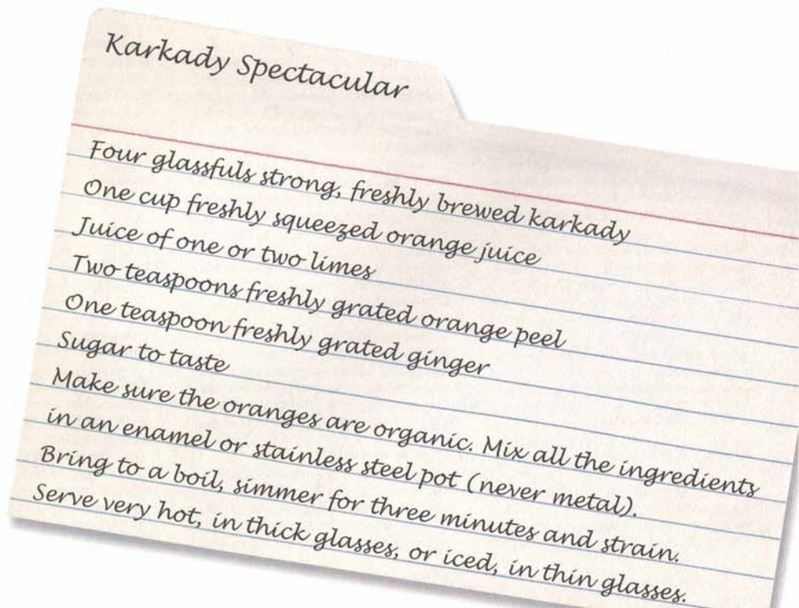
There is another intriguing aspect to *Hibiscus sabdariffa*: The whole plant is edible—leaves, seeds, calyces and roots—though it is apparently more healthful and nutritious than outright delicious: One source records that "intensive usage was reported during famine. Leaves were eaten green or dry, cooked with onions and groundnuts [peanuts]." Leaves, seeds and calyces are used in Guinea as a diuretic and as a sedative. In Burma, the seeds are used as an aphrodisiac, in Taiwan as a laxative. In the Philippines the bitter root is roasted, skinned and eaten to stimulate the appetite. In Angola, the heated leaves, which produce a thick juice like *Aloe vera*, are used as a poultice to speed the healing of wounds. In several countries it is a folk remedy for certain cancers. Sudanese herbalists believe that karkady lowers blood pressure—and western scientists have confirmed the claim, identifying a glucoside, hibiscin, as the agent. Cairo doctors invariably prescribe drinking two glasses of karkady a day, along with other medication, for their hypertensive patients.

Karkady is also useful as a vegetable. The freshly picked sepals, tasting slightly of lemon, can be roughly chopped and mixed into an oiled lettuce salad. In the West Indies, karkady is used to season curries and make jelly, syrup, puddings, sherbet and sauces.

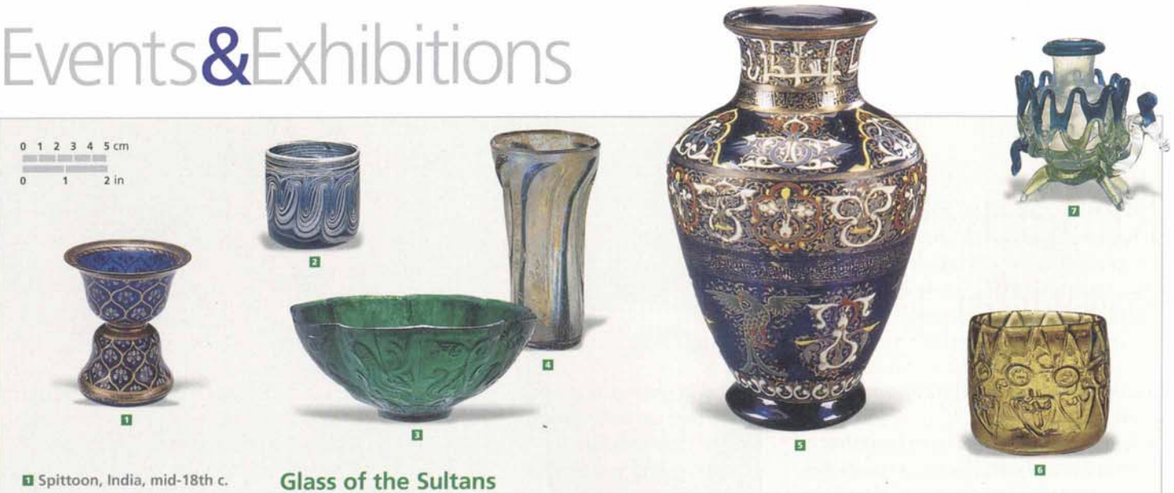
In the early 1960's, when the world awoke to the dangers of some synthetic food dyes, karkady became a popular natural coloring agent for many drinks and foods, and even for pink and red meats. These days much of the karkady used for coloring is supplied by Senegal, where the dried calyces are pressed into 80-kilogram (175-lb) balls for shipment to pharmaceutical and food manufacturers in Europe.

As a ravishing bright red drink, as a folk remedy, as a pharmaceutical aid and commercial coloring agent, karkady is surely one of the Earth's "wonder plants," a gift of God that seems almost a remnant of the Garden of Eden. What more can you ask of a single plant?

John Feeney lives in Cairo, where he is a freelance writer and film producer and a frequent contributor to *Saudi Aramco World*. He thanks the head of the Medicinal and Aromatic Plants Section of the South Tahreer Horticulture Research Station for his assistance.



Events&Exhibitions



1 Spittoon, India, mid-18th c.
2 Cup, Egypt or Syria, 8th–9th c.
3 Bowl, Western Asia, perhaps Iran, 9th–10th c.
4 Beaker, Syria, 12th–13th c.
5 The Cavour Vase, probably Syria, late 13th c.
6 Cup, Egypt, Syria, or Iraq, 9th–10th c.
7 "Cage," Animal Flask, Syria, 7th–8th c.

Glass of the Sultans

is the first-ever museum survey of rare Islamic glass, featuring some 160 of the most spectacular glass objects from the world's preeminent collections. Early Islamic glassmakers generally lacked royal patronage and glass, as a decorative language, depended on individual artisans and workshops for its development. Beginning in the ninth century, however, Islamic glass underwent a renaissance in technique and accomplishment, and masterpieces were produced during the 'Abbasid, Fatimid, Ayyubid and Mamluk dynasties. Later, the Safavid, Ottoman and Mughal empires, whose elites strongly patronized the arts, produced and appreciated artistically decorated glass. Organized by technique—undecorated blown glass, mold-blown glass, hot-worked glass, mosaic glass, cold-cut and engraved glass, and painted glass—the exhibition displays seventh-century works influenced by imperial Roman glassmaking traditions; Iranian relief-cut glass, including cameos; ornately gilded and enameled works from the 13th and 14th centuries and brilliant 19th-century Persian and Indian glass. Also on show are examples of work by European artists who strove to imitate Islamic styles, including Philippe-Joseph Brocard, the Art Nouveau designer Émile Gallé and the Viennese firm J. & L. Lobmeyr. Catalogue. **New York**, Metropolitan Museum of Art, October 2 through January 13, 2002.

METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART: (1), (2) AL-SABAH COLLECTION, DAR AL-ATHAR AL-ISLAMIYYAH, KUWAIT NATIONAL MUSEUM; (3), (6) THE CORNING MUSEUM OF GLASS; (4) THE TOLEDO MUSEUM OF ART; (5) MUSEUM OF ISLAMIC ART, QATAR; (7) THE DAVID COLLECTION, COPENHAGEN

<< September

Masterworks from the Age of the Pyramids showcases extraordinary objects that epitomize the lasting achievements of Egypt's Old Kingdom period, including monumental royal sculpture, stone vessels, jewelry, tools and weapons. Nagoya/Boston Museum of Fine Arts, **Nagoya, Japan**, September 15 through February 3.

Antioch: The Lost Ancient City presents the sights and activities of daily life in a great city as it was between the second and sixth centuries, revealing the inhabitants' public and private lives. A variety of mosaics, sculpture, frescoes, glass, metalwork, pottery, coins and weights are displayed in their architectural and cultural contexts. Catalogue. **Baltimore** Museum of Art, September 16 through December 30.

Turkish Cinema Now is the Freer Gallery's second survey of films from Turkey. September 16: *Run for Money;* September 23: *Clouds of May;* September 30: *Third Page;* October 5: *House of Angels;* October 7: *A Madonna in Laleli* and *On Board;* October 12: *Balalaika*. All are in Turkish with English subtitles. Admission is free. Information: 202-357-2700. Freer Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**

Reeds & Wool: Patterned Screens of Central Asia features 19th- and 20th-century screens made by nomadic Kyrgyz women as traditional furnishings for a yurt dwelling. The motifs of Kyrgyz reed screens are similar to those of flatwoven *kilims*, mosaic felt rugs, and silk *ikat* fabrics, but are made by wrapping unspun dyed wool around the long stems of *chiy*, a slender, stiff grass native to Central Asia. Headley-Whitney Museum, **Lexington, Kentucky**, through September 16.

The Glory of Ancient Egypt's Civilization displays more than 123 objects selected from the inexhaustible collection of the Egyptian Museum of Cairo and the Luxor Museum. **Niigata [Japan]** Prefectural Museum, September 18 through October 23; Sogo Art Museum, **Yokohama**, November 8 through December 10.

Poetry of the Loom: Persian Textiles in the MFA spans 15 centuries of weaving and includes silks, velvets, embroideries, printed and painted cottons, rugs and costumes juxtaposed with Persian manuscript paintings and decorative arts. Museum of Fine Arts, **Boston**, September 19 through January 21.

Exploring Ancient Egypt features over 100 objects spanning 4000 years of ancient Egyptian history, from pre-dynastic times to the Roman era. Dennos Museum Center, **Traverse City, Michigan**, through September 19.

Women of the Nile explores the essential role of women and their variety of responsibilities in the four primary aspects of Egyptian life: in the home, the temple, the palace and the afterlife. Dennos Museum Center, **Traverse City, Michigan** through September 19; Muscarelle Museum of Art, William and Mary, **Williamsburg, Virginia**, October 13 through January 13.

Glass in the Ancient Mediterranean: The Eugene Schaefer Collection of Ancient Glass traces the use of glass from its beginnings as a rare and magical medium in ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, through the colorful perfume containers of ancient Greece to its mass production under the Romans. Glass in jewelry and women's vanity items are also shown, as are video clips of master glassmaker Bill Gudenrath demonstrating ancient glassmaking techniques. **Newark** Museum, **New Jersey**, opens September 21.

Ancient Egyptian Records: A Study at Christ's College, Cambridge is a series of four lectures on early rock art, pyramid texts, tomb reliefs and Coptic manuscripts, presented in aid of the Coptic Manuscripts Conservation Project. **Cambridge** University, **England**, September 22.

The Art Crafts of Tunisia benefit from that country's long history as a center of trade and a crossroads where, now as in centuries past, the East, the West and Africa come together. Weaving, ceramics, leatherwork, copper enameling and engraving, furniture, musical instruments and jewelry are all lively contemporary art-crafts on display. Société d'Encouragement aux Métiers d'Art (SEMA), **Paris**, through September 23.

Gold of the Nomads: Scythian Treasures from Ancient Ukraine presents 165 of the finest gold objects from Scythian graves and burial mounds, many in the "animal style" associated with the Central Asian steppes, and many excavated since 1975 and thus never before exhibited in the United States. Scythian arms, horse trappings and other artifacts show Near Eastern and Greek influence, and recently excavated items are causing a reevaluation of the interrelationships among the Aegean world, the Near East, and Central Asia as far east as Mongolia. Grand Palais, **Paris**, September 25 through December 31.

Courtly Radiance: Metalwork from Islamic India displays some 25 objects of daily and ceremonial use fashioned from silver, bronze, copper and other metals during the 16th and 17th centuries. Highlights include a monumental metal fountain of the late 17th century, a rare Mughal vase with superb tracery work, examples of the celebrated *bidri* inlay tradition and a richly embellished writing box. The variety of technical and decorative effects, such as casting, etching, chasing, inlay and hammered relief, reflects inspirations from within India as well as from the greater Islamic world. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, September 25 through March 24.

The Fabric of Everyday Life: Historic Textiles from Karanis, Egypt features 3500 Roman-era textiles found during excavations in the 1920's and 1930's in Karanis, in the Fayyum Basin near Cairo. This exhibit displays a variety of everyday textiles, most spanning the time from the first century BC to the third century of our era, and helps bring to life a Roman town in Egypt. Kelsey Museum of Archaeology, **Ann Arbor, Michigan**, September 28 through December 23.

Teaching About the Arab World and Islam is the theme of teacher workshops co-sponsored by the Middle East Policy Council in Washington, D.C. and conducted by Arab World and Islamic Resources and School Services (AWAIR) of Berkeley, California. The program is fully funded and workshops can be requested by any school, district office of education or university. Scheduled sites and dates include: **Monterey, California**, September 28; **Houston**, October13; **Dallas**, October 25; **Hattiesburg, Mississippi**, October 19; **Jackson, Mississippi**, October 20; **Santa Clara, California**, October 27 and November 1; **Princeton, West Virginia**, November 10; **New York City**, November 17. Information: 202-296-6767 or 510-704-0517; awair@igc.apc.org.

Ancient Egypt: Digging for Dreams displays more than 100 ancient Egyptian objects from the little-known collection of the Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology. Burrell Collection, **Glasgow**, through September 30.

Gold from Africa presents Ashanti royal gold jewelry, insignia and ceremonial objects, as well as everyday jewelry, from Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire. The clarity, simplicity and elegance of the pieces, from a private collection, show a surprising affinity to modern jewelry design, though most of the more than 200 objects on display were created in the last 150 years and one piece dates back 400 years. Photos, cultural material and audiovisual aids provide context. Neue Galerie der Stadt **Linz**, Austria, through September 30.

The Splendor of the Córdoban Umayyads brings together some 300 objects from 50 museums that demonstrate the elegance, sophistication and erudition that marked Muslim Córdoba under the rule of Caliph 'Abd al-Rahman III more than a thousand years ago. On display are decorative panels, bronze ewers, jewelry, marble capitals, ceramics, ivory chests and caskets, textiles, books and coins, as well as a pair of engraved bronze fountainheads in the shape of deer. Madinat al-Zahra, **Córdoba, Spain**, through September 30.

Pearl and Mother-of-Pearl explores the nature, origin and use of the "tears of the Naiads" from antiquity to today through etchings on mother-of-pearl, rare pearls and curiosities. Abbazia di San Fruttuoso, **Camogli (Genova), Italy**, through September 30.

Agatha Christie and the East: Criminology and Archeology traces those two strands in the life of the "Queen of Crime," displaying diaries; hitherto unpublished photographs of Christie and her husband, archeologist Max Mallowan; more than 200 artifacts from his excavations in Iraq and Syria; and a compartment from the Orient Express. The exhibition emphasizes Christie's participation in the digs as restorer and photographer. Vorderasiatisches Museum, **Berlin**, through September 30; British Museum, **London**, November 9 through March 17.

<< October

Akhnaten, the opera by Philipp Glass (1983), will be performed in the Muziektheater Hollandsch Diep in **Dordrecht, Netherlands**, during the month of October. Information: +31-78-631-9511.

North Africa Travel Day is a conference dedicated to the history of travel in North Africa and the Sahara, including explorer narratives, trade routes, contemporary tourism, film, photographic and documentary evidence and the whole literature of travel in the region. Information: +44-20-7833-0762 or barnaby@inglebert.demon.co.uk. **London**, October 3.

The Gods of Ancient Memphis showcases 118 works of Egyptian art including metal and stone statues and statuettes, reliefs, stelae, amulets and jewelry, some never before publicly displayed, some excavated at the site of the ancient Egyptian capital, Memphis. The exhibition presents a lively and multifaceted image of the sacred world of the Egyptians, and includes among its outreach programs a "scribe's school" that teaches hieroglyphic writing, children's workshops and public lectures. Art Museum of the University of **Memphis, Tennessee**, through October 4.

Current Archeological Research. The lectures in this series, which runs through June, concern discoveries and scholarship in the Middle East and western Asia. Each is presented at noon by a speaker intimately involved in the work under discussion.
• October 4: "Two Journeys Along the Silk Roads in the Islamic Period in Kazakhstan," Alastair Nothedge
• October 5: "New Aspects of Punic Carthage," Jean-Paul Morel
• October 18: "Discovery of Major Protohistoric Sites in the Mansurah Region [Egyptian Delta]," Salem Gabr el-Baghdadi
• October 19: "Tilbeshar [southeastern Turkey] From the Fourth to the Second Millennium," Christine Kepinski
• November 16: "The Plain of Jablé [Syria]," Michel al-Maqdissi
• December 6: "The Pyramids of the Queens of Pepi I at Saqqara," Audran Labrousse
• December 7: "Phoenicians and Iberians in Southeastern Spain," Pierre Rouillard
• December 17: "Sarissa in Eastern Cappadocia [Turkey]," Andreas Müller-Karpe
Information: +33-1-4020-8498 or Brisset@louvre.fr. Musée du Louvre, **Paris**.

The New Egyptian Galleries unveil the most significant collection of Egyptian funerary art to be purchased by a museum in the last 50 years. Among the 150 objects are ten painted coffins, including a rare complete nesting set, nine mummies, canopic jars, amulets, jewelry, *shawabtis* and reliefs. Catalogue. Carlos Museum, **Atlanta**, opens October 6.

Exploring the Holy Land: The Prints of David Roberts and Beyond focuses on the past two centuries, documenting the changes that have occurred in the physical landscape, in the relationships between ancient and contemporary cultures, and in human geography. The exhibition presents lithographs by David Roberts, early photographs by the École Biblique et Archéologique Française de Jérusalem, modern color photographs of the same locales, and artifacts. Bowers Museum of Cultural Art, **Santa Ana, California**, October 6 through January 9.

Empire of the Sultans: Ottoman Art from the Khalili Collection explores the influence of the Ottoman sultans over affairs of state and religion with displays of calligraphy, Qur'anic and other manuscripts, arms and armor, metalwork, ceramics, textiles and scientific instruments from the Nasser D. Khalili Collection of Islamic Art. Catalogue. Asian Art Museum of **San Francisco**, through October 7; Bruce Museum, **Greenwich, Connecticut**, October 27 through January 27.

The Art of the Arab Book traces a chronological and thematic path through the universe of the written word in one of the world's great book-loving cultures. The exhibition ranges from manuscripts to printed works, with an excursion into contemporary Arab artists' views on calligraphy, writing and the manuscript. Bibliothèque nationale de France (Richelieu), **Paris**, October 9 through January 13.

Conversations With Traditions: Nilima Sheikh and Shahzia Sikander explores the work of two contemporary South Asian women artists in a dialogue with their traditional sources: Indian miniature paintings. Asia Society. **New York**, opens October 13.

Monks and Merchants: Silk Road Treasures From Northwest China, 4th–7th Century includes more than 120 spectacular artifacts—metalwork, textiles, glass, funerary furniture and ceramics—excavated in Gansu Province and Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region, at the eastern end of the Silk Roads. Most have never been seen before in the West. The exhibition tells the story of intercultural contacts through trade and religion rather than military conquest, and reveals the impact of the new religious, ethnic and cultural influences that penetrated and transformed China during this time. Among the artifacts are some important "exotic" items, either imports from Central or Western Asia—including a Sasanian sword and glass bowl—or Chinese-made objects influenced by foreign styles. Asia Society. **New York**, October 13 through January 6.

Yo-Yo Ma and the Silk Road Ensemble is a free concert at the Freer Gallery of Art by the internationally renowned cellist and a chamber ensemble of Asian and Western musicians who explore ancient and contemporary cultural interactions along the historical Silk Road. The concert is part of the Silk Road Festival in **Washington, D.C.** October 16, 7:30 p.m.

Saudi Arabia and Islam features an extensive cross-section of objects on loan from the Nance Museum. University of Missouri at **Kansas City**, October 16 through November 9.

London and the Orient is an exhibition of watercolors and oil paintings by artist Caroline Lees, a former resident of Saudi Arabia, featuring views of Oman, Libya, Tunisia, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, Yemen and India as well as views of London. Rafael Valls Gallery, **London**, October 16–27.

Strokes of Genius: Contemporary Iraqi Art shows 55 works in varied media, selected by an intercultural curatorial panel and created by 34 Iraqi artists living in that country and in more than a dozen countries abroad. The 34 are among 150 artists, many of them young, who have contributed over five years to produce a book, website and traveling exhibition that highlights both historical roots and contemporary experiences. The book of the same title (London, Saqi Books, ISBN 0-86356-563-8, £17.95 hb, October 2001) uses reproductions, interviews, essays and biographical sketches to impart a broad understanding of Iraqi art in recent decades. Information: www.strokes-of-genius.com. Egee Art Consultancy, **London**, October 17 through November 3.

The Jeweled Arts of India in the Age of the Mughals shows some 300 pieces dating from the mid-16th to the early 18th century from the al-Sabah Collection of Kuwait. In addition to earrings, pendants and bracelets, the show also features a superb collection of daggers with jewel-encrusted scabbards and hilts (including the famous Ruby Dagger), as well as jeweled boxes, cups and gaming pieces. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, October 18 through January 13.

Traditional Iran displays ethnographic portraits, street scenes and cartoons of daily life along with textiles, brassware, wooden figures and replicas of monuments, from the collection of the Nance Museum. Central **Missouri** State University Museum, **Warrensburg**, opens October 18, permanent.

Along the Nile/Threads From the Nile displays some 170 objects which trace the history of Coptic art from the second to the 14 century of our era. The art of weaving is the thematic thread that runs through the exhibition, but other objects shed light on daily life of this era, and also illuminate Albert Gayet's famous excavation at Antinoë and stylistic currents in Coptic art. Musée Dobrée, **Nantes, France**, October 19 through January 20.

Cleopatra of Egypt: From History to Myth looks at the real-life reign of Cleopatra VII, last of the Ptolemaic line to rule in Egypt, whose liaisons with Julius Caesar and Mark Antony, and her suicide in 30 BC upon Octavian's capture of Egypt, have made

Tile from Iran, 13th century.

The Spirit of Islam:
Experiencing Islam Through Calligraphy

is the first major exhibition in Canada to address the arts and beliefs of Islam. Through the time-honored art of calligraphy, visitors will be introduced to the aesthetics, spirituality and principles of education of the Muslim world. The exhibition will include a gallery, a prayer space, and a *madrassa,* or school. Objects that include calligraphy as integral or decorative elements are on display, including a 14th-century glass mosque lamp commissioned by the Mamluk Sultan Barquq, an 11th-century ceramic bowl from Samarkand, a brass astrolabe from 14th-century Iran, ceramic tiles, inlaid furniture, 19th-century armor, and the famous "Blue Qur'an" from North Africa. Educational programs, music and dance performances will also be offered. Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia, **Vancouver**, opens October 20.

her an object of fascination ever since. Of Macedonian descent, she was the only ruler of her house to learn the Egyptian language and sacred iconography, and she used them skillfully to political advantage. Field Museum, **Chicago**, October 20 through March 3.

Modern Mongolia: Reclaiming Genghis Khan challenges the traditional view of the great conqueror by inviting the visitor to see Mongolia through the eyes of his modern descendants. Three life-size dioramas of *gers* (the Mongolian word for "yurt") feature many of the exhibition's 192 costumes and artifacts, shown in America for the first time. Rare archival photographs reconstruct 20th-century nomadic life, and four films made especially for the exhibition provide historical background and help illuminate Genghis Khan's relationship to contemporary Mongolians' democratic ideals. University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, **Philadelphia**, October 20 through July.

Syria, Land of Civilizations assembles more than 400 cultural treasures—some never before seen abroad—to present one of the world's oldest cultural centers and explore some of the seminal events that took place there. The exhibition also highlights the West's intellectual and scientific ties to Syria. Catalogue. A concurrent exhibition, **Contemporary Syria,** explores everyday life, particularly from the perspective of young people. Riverfront Arts Center, **Wilmington, Delaware**, through October 21.

The Eternal Image: Egyptian Art from the British Museum includes some 150 pieces that span 3000 years of Egyptian history, from a tiny royal portrait of carved ivory to the colossal granite statue of Seti II. Included also are rare wooden sculptures and papyrus paintings, neither of which survived the passage of years in great numbers. Pyramid, Memphis, **Tennessee**, through October 21.

Earthen Architecture: Constructive Cultures and Sustainable Development is the theme of six separate, intensive courses in project design and building and conservation techniques, many of which are drawn from traditional methods of the Middle East. Course lengths vary from four days to four weeks, and all instruction is in French. Information: www.craterre.archi.fr. CRATerre-EAG, **Grenoble, France**. Courses end October 26.

Roman Egypt: *Life According to the Numismatic Sources*. Staatliches Museum für Völkerkunde, Residenzschloss, **Munich**, through October 29.

Islamic Moorish Spain: Its Legacy to Europe and the West explores the brilliant age of Muslim rule in Spain and Portugal from the eighth to the 15th century, when an extraordinary mixture of Muslim, Christian and Jewish peoples and cultures flourished in such centers of art and learning as Córdoba and Granada. Islamic Spain's vibrant legacy of tolerance and intellectual achievement is examined through a variety of media: film, art, architectural design, portraiture, maps, agricultural displays and music. International Museum of Muslim Cultures, **Jackson, Mississippi**, through October 31.

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November

Pharaoh Marks the Borders: Textual Analysis via Traditional Philology and Electronic Media centers on a 1½-ton inscribed sandstone stele that Pharaoh Sesostris III placed between the territories of Egypt and Nubia in 1857 BC to mark both the border of his empire and the victory that established it. The stele provided one of the early texts deciphered in the Ancient Egyptian Dictionary Project, begun in 1897 and not completed till 1931. The 1,500,000-word dictionary is being updated and expanded by electronic means and will be published on the Internet. The ongoing work on the computer version is presented. Museum Schloss Hohentübingen, **Burgsteig, Germany**, through November 4.

Fabulous Creatures From the Desert Sands presents unique woolen tapestries, made some 2000 years ago in Central Asia and notable for their intense colors and mysterious designs. The objects in the exhibition were found during excavations in the Taklamakan Desert of northwest China and are presented here to the public for the first time. Abegg-Stiftung, **Riggisberg, Switzerland**, through November 4.

Egypt: In the Empire of the Pharaohs offers more than 200 objects—jewelry, sculpture, amulets, reliefs—from the Roemer und Pelizaeus-Museum and the Vienna Kunsthistorisches Museum to demonstrate how greatly beauty, in this life and the next, was desired, idealized and pursued in ancient Egyptian culture. Kunsthalle **Leoben, Austria**, through November 4.

The Astronomy of the Pharaohs explores the mythology and science of ancient Egypt. Planétarium de **Montreal**, through November 18.

Worlds of Wonder and Desire traces the evolution of Indian painting from the 12th to the early 20th century and depicts a variety of traditional themes. Watercolors, executed on palm leaf, paper, ivory and cloth, were commissioned by nobles, religious institutions and well-to-do merchants, and celebrate the pleasures of the royal courts, love, the seasons of the year and musical modes. **Virginia** Museum of Fine Arts, **Richmond**, November 21 through February 24.

Hunted and Deified: The Animal in Ancient Egypt presents one of the most attractive themes of Egyptian life in paintings, reliefs and sculpture, and makes it clear that a walk through the world of Egyptian animals is also a walk through more than 3000 years of cultural history. The first part of the exhibition takes the visitor into Egypt's papyrus thickets (fishes, birds and hippos); the second presents desert creatures: ibex and antelope, hunted by salukis and lions—and a unique porcupine. Representations of domestic animals, including monkeys, make up the third segment. A fourth presents animals as symbols: falcons, baboons, lions as embodiments of virtues or powers; cats and crocodiles as embodiments of deities. Staatliche Sammlung Ägyptischer Kunst, Schloss Seefeld, **Munich**, through November 25.

Nubia: Land of Gold of the Pharaohs shows 250 objects from 5000 BC to AD 1000, illustrating the history of the ancient cultures of Sudan, from its beginnings, through the kingdom of Kerma, the Napata empire and the Meroë empire, down to the Berlin Egyptian Museum's most recent excavations of the town of Naga, which seem to show that the "Land of Kush" may have been the original source from which Egyptian civilization developed. Staatliche Sammlung Ägyptischer Kunst, Schloss Seefeld, **Munich**, through November 25.

Coinage in Navarra presents coins and medals that narrate the history of the province from classical times to the present. Museo de Navarra, **Pamplona, Spain**, through November 26.

Story in Stone—Story of Sacredness shows watercolors by Bill Doughty inspired by the religious monuments of the three monotheistic faiths that regard Jerusalem as sacred. Light of the Word Gallery, **Techny, Illinois**, through November 30.

Fire and Sand: A Thousand Years of Glass in the French Midi presents the results of recent research into the production of and trade in glass between the third century BC and the fourth century of our era. The more than 350 pieces include locally produced ware and glass imported from abroad, including the Islamic world, and illustrate manufacturing techniques and the trade in raw materials, know-how and finished goods. Musée d'Histoire de la ville de **Marseille**, through November 30.

UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA MUSEUM OF ANTHROPOLOGY / NASSER D. KHALILI COLLECTION OF ISLAMIC ART, POT 1677

December

The Stibbert Museum houses the collection of English expatriate Frederick Stibbert (1830–1906), and features European and Oriental weapons—including rare examples of Near and Middle Eastern Muslim military equipment—civil and military costumes from the 16th through the 19th century, period paintings, textiles, porcelain and furniture. **Florence, Italy**, through December 1.

Visual Poetry: Paintings and Drawings from Iran and India highlights the work of artists who, beginning in the late 15th century, created independent drawings and paintings that no longer corresponded to a specific text. Freed from the stricture of the written word, these works focused primarily on figural themes and explored the formal potential of line and color in a new manner. Some 30 works are on display, including several by Riza Abbasi, the most celebrated painter of this genre, and by other notable artists active in 16th- and 17th-century Iran and India. Sackler Gallery, **Washington, D.C.**, December 16 through May 5.

Steel, Gold and Precious Stones: Oriental Arms in the Armeria Reale presents a selection of objects from the regions between the Balkans and Japan. Armeria Reale, **Torino, Italy**, through December 23.

Along the Nile: Photographs of Egypt 1850–1870 showcases approximately 45 19th-century photographs of Egypt and includes some of the earliest camera images of Egypt's dramatic landscapes, inhabitants, and imposing monuments by the first generation of photographers working in Egypt, including Maxime du Camp, Félix Teynard, John Beasley Greene, Ernest Benecke, Gustave Le Gray, Francis Firth, Felice Beato, and W. Hammerschmidt. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through December 30.

The Pharaoh's Photographer: Harry Burton, Tutankhamun, and the Metropolitan's Egyptian Expedition displays some 60 photographs taken between 1906 and 1936 by members of the Metropolitan Museum's expedition. The exhibition presents these images both in their context as important documents of the excavations and as works of artistic merit that deserve a place in the history of photography. Most are by Harry Burton (1879–1940), the outstanding archeological photographer of his day, who was hired by the museum to photograph the monuments at Thebes. Metropolitan Museum of Art, **New York**, through December 30.

New Department of Egyptian Antiquities is devoted to ancient, Ptolemaic and Coptic Egypt and brings together pieces from private and public collections and objects on loan from the British Museum. **Basel [Switzerland]** Museum of Ancient Arts, through December.

Later

Discovery and Myth: The Burial Chamber of Tutankhamun explores how an Egyptian pharaoh became a phenomenon of contemporary cultural history. The tomb's discovery is described as well as the "Tutmania" of the 1970's and 1980's. A replica of the burial chamber is also presented. Deutsches Elfenbeinmuseum, **Erback/Odenwald, Germany**, through January 6.

The Collector's Eye: Masterpieces of Egyptian Art from Thalassic Collections, Ltd. showcases over 175 relics of pharaonic civilization from the collection of Theodore Halkedis, one of the finest private collections of ancient Egyptian art in the world. Dates of the objects on display range from pre-dynastic Egypt, around 3500 BC, to the Roman era. The collection features a rare statue of the Middle Kingdom pharaoh Amenemhet IV, a red granite bust of an 18th-Dynasty queen, jewels, inlays, architectural decorations and objects of everyday use. Catalogue. Carlos Museum, **Atlanta**, through January 6.

Reflections of the Divine. In Ancient Egypt, Greece and Rome, craftsmen always applied their greatest skills to the noblest of materials (earthenware and bronze) when honoring the gods. This exhibition, which assembles a hundred or so works from a private Genevois collection, seeks to evoke the millennial spirituality reflected in the art of three great civilizations. Musée d'art et d'histoire, **Geneva**, through January 28.

From the Amu Darya to the Potomac: Central Asian Bags from Area Collections features pile bags dating from the 19th century and earlier from the Turkmen, Baluch, Uzbek and Kyrgyz ethnic groups. The bags are beautiful, yet fully functional objects for everyday use both in the yurt home and on pack animals. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**, through February 24.

Classical Tradition in Anatolian Carpets presents approximately 40 works dating from the 14th through the 19th centuries in the context of their history and relationship to a centuries-old weaving tradition. Textile Museum, **Washington, D.C.**, through February 2003.

Recent Work of 12 Arab Artists: The Egee Art Gallery Selection offers a survey of some of the foremost Arab artists at work in the world today, whose paintings and ceramics reflect the intercultural climate from which they draw their inspiration. A diverse array of styles, techniques and topics informs the works: Calligraphy influences some of the artists while others are inspired by political events; some defy attribution to a specific cultural heritage. A total of nearly 50 works are exhibited, all on loan from the Egee Art Gallery in London. Catalogue. World Museum, **Rotterdam**, through March 24.

Traders to Tartary uses maps, artifacts, life-size dioramas and a recreated Bukhara market stall to trace the paths of the traders who traveled back and forth from Germany and Poland to the Caspian Sea from the Middle Ages to the 19th century, exchanging European woolens, amber and silver for Central Asian silks, furs, horses, carpets and gems. Yeshiva University Museum, **New York**, through July.

Qurna Discovery: Life on the Theban Hills 1826 is a unique record of the village of Qurna (Gourna) and of the Theban necropolis that has long supported the village economy. The exhibition includes copies of two 360-degree panoramic drawings, showing tombs, tomb dwellings and the richness of Qurnawi life, that were made by Scottish artist and explorer Robert Hay in 1826. Information: www.sepcom.demon.co.uk/Hay/main.html. **Qurna, Egypt**, permanent.

The Touma Near Eastern Collection is a lavish assembly of antiquities, ceramics, manuscripts, icons, architectural tiles, edged weapons, firearms, brass and copper vessels, furniture and prayer rugs recently donated to the Huntington Museum of Art by Drs. Joseph and Omayma Touma. **Huntington, West Virginia**, permanent.

Saudi Bedouin Jewelry displays more than 100 pieces recently donated by Lewis Hatch and Marie Kukuk that have doubled the museum's collection. Information: 816-697-2526. Nance Museum, **Lone Jack, Missouri**, permanent.

The Saudi Aramco Exhibit, newly renovated, relates the heritage of Arab-Islamic scientists and scholars of the past to the technology of today's petroleum exploration, production and transportation, set against the background of the natural history of Saudi Arabia. **Dhahran, Saudi Arabia**.

Information is correct at press time, but please reconfirm dates and times before traveling. Most institutions listed have further information available on the World Wide Web. Readers are welcome to submit information for possible inclusion in this listing.

50 Years of *Aramco World* is a traveling exhibit of 76 photographs from the magazine's first half-century, selected for their artistic and educational qualities. The images show a changing view of the Middle East, and captions link photographs to historical patterns of communication about the region. The exhibit is available for temporary display in schools and universities and at special events. For details and information on availability, please write Dick Doughty, Assistant Editor, *Saudi Aramco World*, Box 2106, Houston, Texas, 77252, USA.

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