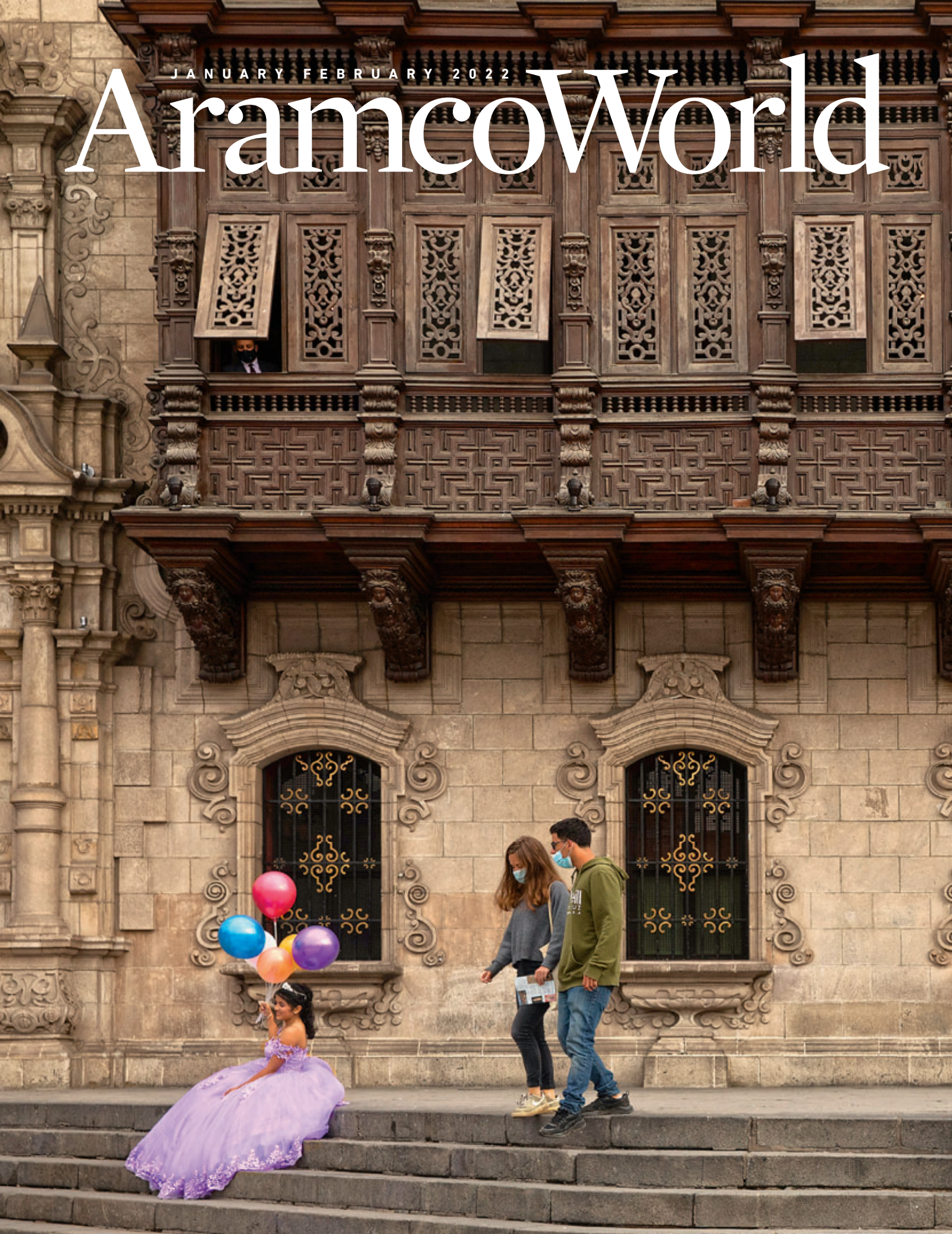
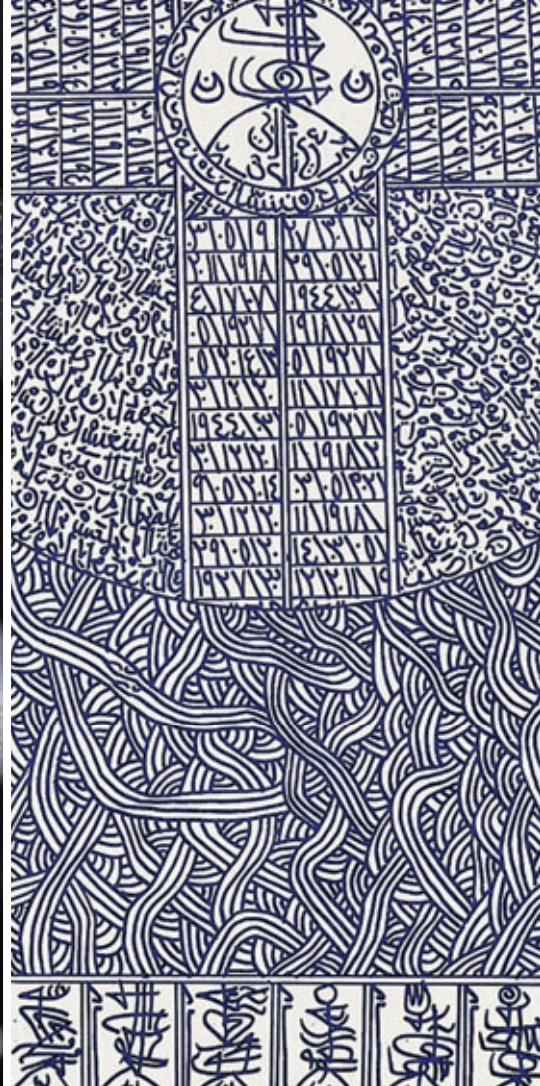


JANUARY FEBRUARY 2022

# AramcoWorld





## 6 The Muralist

Written by **Matthew Teller**  
Photographed by **Andrew Shaylor**

At once playful and disciplined, Hatiq Mohammed—"Teakster"—uses traditional Islamic motifs, Arabic calligraphy and deep colors to "join communities together" in public projects of collaborative creativity that energize cultural dialog.

## 12 Behind Lima's Box Balconies

Written by **Mitra Taj**  
Photographed by **Mariana Bazo**

Originally designed to allow a gaze out to the street while blocking both harsh sunlight and prying eyes, the wooden "box balconies" that proliferated after the founding of Lima in 1535 drew from Spain's Islamic heritage. They are now beloved cultural emblems of the Peruvian capital that, if they could share stories, could tell many a tale.

## 22 Sea of Tears, Garden of Memory

Written by **Juliet Highet**  
Photographs courtesy of **Rachid Koraichi / October Gallery**

Moved to memorialize the mostly anonymous people who continue to perish while crossing the Mediterranean Sea from North Africa to Europe, Algerian artist Rachid Koraichi has opened both an exhibition and a working cemetery.

 2 FIRSTLOOK  4 FLAVORS  38 REVIEWS

# AramcoWorld

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2022 | VOL. 73, NO. 1

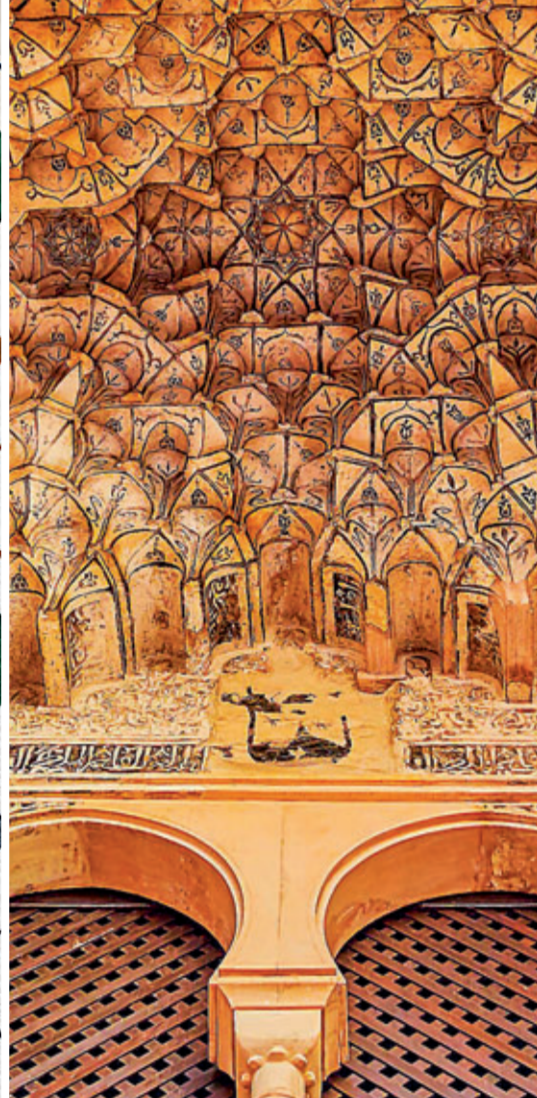
[aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com)



We distribute *AramcoWorld* in print and online to increase cross-cultural understanding by broadening knowledge of the histories, cultures and geography of the Arab and Muslim worlds and their global connections.

**FRONT COVER** Backdrop for countless photos in the historic center of Lima, a young woman poses beneath one of the city's most famous *balcones de cajón*, or box balconies, that of the Palace of the Archbishop. Photo by Mariana Bazo.

**BACK COVER** Driver-in-training Aisha Meirmanova, 26, is a former flight attendant for Air Astana in Kazakhstan. She sees trucking as a way her young family can save so that one day she might open her own business. Photo by Bear Gutierrez.



## 28 Central Asian Women Hit the US Road

Written by **J. Trevor Williams**  
Photographed by **Bear Gutierrez**

As the US trucker shortage deepens, there's never been a better time to work behind the wheel. Joining those on the road are a growing number of women from Central Asia, where nomadism and can-do have long roots in the cultures of the Silk Roads.

## 34 Art of Islamic Patterns: Alicatado

Written by **Richard Henry**  
and **Adam Williamson**  
Art courtesy of **Art of Islamic Pattern**

In this six-part series, we begin by learning how to draw, step by step, a swirling dance of geometry from a famous cut-tile wall panel in the Alhambra palace in Granada, Spain. It's easier than it looks.

CALENDAR INSERT

## Muqarnas

2022 Gregorian and  
1443–1444 Hijri Calendar

Introduction by **Sheila Blair**  
and **Jonathan Bloom**

Intricately crystalline *muqarnas* have dazzled eyes and imaginations for centuries across Islamic lands from the Atlantic to the Indian oceans and much of Western Asia.

 **40 EVENTS**     **Online LEARNING CENTER**

Publisher: Aramco Americas | President and CEO: Nabeel I. AlAfaleg | Director, Public Affairs: Rania B. Biltagi | Editor: Richard Doughty | Managing Editor: Jennifer Mathlouthi | Assistant Editor: Alva Robinson | Digital Media Editor: Johnny Hanson | Digital Support: Waleed Dashash, David Lugo | Administration: Sarah Miller | Intern: Yazmine White | Print design: Graphic Engine Design | Printing: RR Donnelley / Wetmore | Web design: eSiteful Corporation

Subscriptions: [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com) | Editorial: [editor@aramcoamericas.com](mailto:editor@aramcoamericas.com)

Mail: *AramcoWorld*, Post Office Box 2106, Houston, Texas 77252-2106, USA

ISSN: 1530-5821





# FIRSTLOOK


## Golden Hour in Karachi, Pakistan

Photograph by Khaula Jamil

For a long time now, I have felt there is a richer, more complete narrative about Karachi—my hometown—than what is often produced in news media. I've seen it labeled one of the world's least-livable cities, one of the most violent. Perhaps. But that's not Karachi's full story.

For this photo series, I walked the narrow alleys of Lyari, the most-populated locality of Karachi, with two German filmmakers who were interested in capturing authentic Karachi narratives. It was nearing sunset, and as I looked up, I saw stunning rays of light spilling into the street. It was the "Golden Hour," or "Magic Hour," as we photographers call it—that time right after sunrise and right before sunset that offers the softest, warmest, most-dramatic lighting, perfect for photography. Many people were walking home from work, and I remember thinking I had never seen the Golden Hour quite this distinctively in any part of Karachi before. It was magical indeed, and the scene shown here reflects words that come to my mind in describing my city's people: resilient, passionate, courageous and determined.

—Khaula Jamil

 @khaula28  
khaulajamil.com







# FLAVORS

## Chocolate Date Torte

Recipe by Sarah al-Hamad  
Photograph by Kate Whitaker

**The deglet noor is North Africa’s other grand dame date, alongside the medjool, a native of the oases of Tunisia and Algeria.**

This see-through date is also known as “the translucent;” in Arabic, *noor* means light. Not long ago, at a long, lazy lunch, I enjoyed delicious North African—inspired date and prune torte enrobed in smooth chocolate, not unlike this one.

(Serves 8–10)

4 large eggs, separated

½ teaspoon vanilla extract

Scant ½ cup (85 grams / 3 ounces) light brown sugar

175 grams (6 ounces) hazelnuts or almonds

120 grams (4 ½ ounces) dates, roughly chopped

100 grams (4 ounces) plain chocolate, finely chopped

Preheat the oven to 175 degrees Celsius (345 degrees Fahrenheit). Grease and line a 22-centimeter (9-inch) springform cake pan.

Lightly whisk the egg yolks with the vanilla extract in a small bowl until light and creamy. In a large bowl, whisk the egg whites with a pinch of salt until foamy. Add half the sugar and whisk until pale and stiff peaks form. In a food processor, whizz the nuts with the remaining sugar until crumb-like but not too fine.

Using a large metal spoon, fold the egg-yolk mixture into the whites. Add the nuts, fruit and chocolate, then fold together until combined.

Pour into the cake pan and bake for 20 minutes or until the top is set and pale golden. Turn the oven off and, with the door ajar, leave the torte to cool completely before removing.

Enjoy warm. A slice will reveal the fondant goodness within.

Adapted and reprinted  
with permission from

**Sun Bread and Sticky  
Toffee: Date Desserts  
From Everywhere**

Sarah al-Hamad  
Interlink Books, 2013,  
interlinkbooks.com.



**Sarah al-Hamad** grew up in Kuwait and lives in London. She worked as an editor for Saqi Books and is the author of several cookbooks, including the award-winning *Cardamom and Lime: Flavours from the Arabian Gulf*. She recently completed an MA in creative nonfiction at the University of East Anglia.

KATE WHITAKER



# THE MURALI





# ST

WRITTEN BY  
MATTHEW TELLER  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY  
ANDREW SHAYLOR



**K**neeling on an outdoor drop cloth speckled with blue and green paint, Hatiq Mohammed—known better as the artist Teakster—tapes a star-shaped stencil against a wall. He wears a dark-blue painter's jumper, and he's slung an industrial-grade filtration mask around his neck, ready to protect him from clouds of spray paint.

Soft-spoken amid a boisterous group of students, he is guiding the painting of a mural near their school's playground. It's the same playground at the same Elmhurst School Teakster himself attended when he was a primary student in Aylesbury, England, a town of about 70,000 northwest of London. Now in his late 30s—he's reluctant to be more specific—he's sharing street-smart art with a message of cultural dialog on the walls, streets and galleries of his hometown and the rest of the world.

"Teakster stands out because he values his British heritage and culture, as well as his Muslim culture. He puts the two together, which works really well for our children," says Elmhurst teacher Viv Woon, who assisted with the mural collaboration.

Elmhurst Co-Head Kirsty Needham, who commissioned Teakster earlier last year, says his involvement at the school excites the students, even though they may not realize how acclaimed the artist is throughout the world. To them, he's simply an art teacher guiding them on color contrasts and pattern placements.

Teakster's work has been noted for its playful yet disciplined use of classically based Islamic-themed patterns and explosions of color that draw onlookers' eyes to details of his mixes of Arabic calligraphy, street-style "calligrafitti," arabesque and geometric patterns that at their edges often fade, appear torn, sliced or set in relationship to solid colors or other patterns.

"My job as an artist is to join communities together, to get people to work in cross-cultural conversation," he says,

**LEFT** A 2019 mural in Frankfurt, Germany, uses both Arabic "calligrafitti" and geometric pattern. **LOWER** Teakster, at left, leads a mural at the Aylesbury Vale Blueprint School. "Murals offer accessibility to art without barriers associated with education or finance," he says.





**TOP** At Elmhurst School in Aylesbury, Teakster shows students how to use sticks to hold a stencil on the wall while spray painting the design. **ABOVE, RIGHT** Elmhurst teacher Viv Woon and Co-Head Kirsty Needham take a turn with a stencil and spray can. **ABOVE, LEFT** "This design was created using the concept of Pseudo-Arabic," explains Teakster, that often can be seen in European Renaissance art. "I wanted to modernize this decoration style," he says. **OPPOSITE, CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** London Mural Festival, 2020; New York Art in Ad Places campaign, 2017-2021; a wall mural produced in collaboration with local youth, Buckinghamshire, UK, 2016; Paste-Up Festival Germany, Berlin, 2019.

speaking carefully, responding only when spoken to, as diffident with words as he is brash with colors.

He takes inspiration, he says, from the traditions and complexities of Muslim artists from past centuries.

"We always look at the history of Islamic art in a nostalgic way. I believe we should look at the past critically," he says. "We must not ignore the masters of the past. We should use them as a foundation." His sees his art as playing "an ambassadorial role."

Teakster's art has been featured in galleries and group shows in the US, UK, UAE, Malaysia and more. He's collaborated with better-known artists, including noted Tunisian calligraphiti

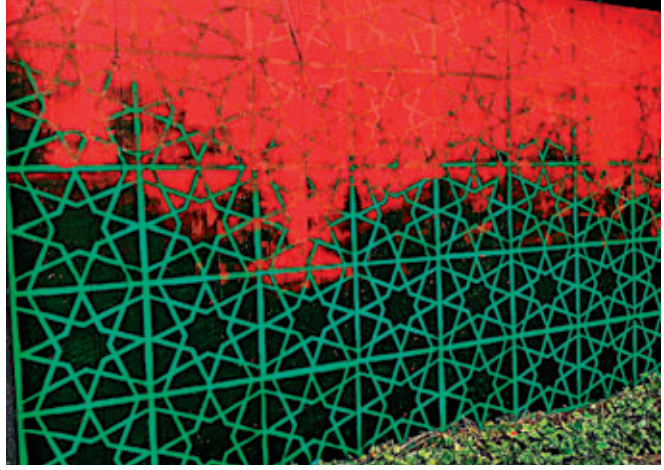
## His designs fuse the raw creative energy of urban graffiti with the poise and heritage of traditional Islamic art.

muralist eL Seed. Teakster, says eL Seed, is "always willing to explore a new medium and new tools" that result in "new narratives" for Muslim communities.

Teakster explains that his name is a play on Hatiq, his given name from his parents, who immigrated to Aylesbury from Pakistan in the 1970s. After settling, his father worked in a local factory to support the family. Neither his father nor mother, he recalls, particularly supported his youthful artistic pursuits, at least not as a career path. But he persisted and found opportunities to create and showcase his work while working other jobs.



THIS PAGE (4) AND PREVIOUS SPREAD, LEFT: COURTESY OF TEAKSTER



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT** Los Angeles, 2019; High Wycombe, UK, 2019; London, 2020; Cambridge, UK, 2020. **LOWER** Like his street art, Teakster's painting style uses strong colors, calligraphy, geometry and a mix of disciplined lines that overlay a background that sizzles with energy. "The focus on these artworks are not on the word but on the letters themselves," says Teakster.

"I had all this pent-up creative anger and energy," he says, remembering nights when he would go home and reimagine designs he had completed for clients earlier in the day.

Through the years, Teakster has cultivated a personal style that fuses the raw energy of urban graffiti with the poise and elegance often found in traditional Islamic art. He views this careful synthesis of esthetics as an opportunity to embrace the past and couple it with contemporary styles.

"Islamic art is about the future. I evolve classic design techniques and give them a contemporary spin," he says.

For years his work has garnered recognition for both the sophistication of technique as well as the messaging behind the symbols.

Teakster says he is motivated by the idea of unity, and the peace that comes with it, rooted in Islamic cultures and traditions.



Olu Taiwo, curator of last year's exhibit *I Matter*, at Babylon Gallery in Ely, UK, chose Teakster as one of 15 showcased artists. He says it was a "fantastic experience" to see how Teakster "harmonizes Middle Eastern artistic traditions and modern techniques inspired by his British upbringing" to create not only visually striking public art, but art that "captures why religion should matter to those who may not be religious." That, Taiwo says, "was an inspiration."

Teakster has also collaborated with Chinese master calligrapher Haji Noor Deen Mi Guangjiang, and it's through such international projects, with artists who share similar fundamental goals, that Teakster seeks to make the world more peaceful through artistic expression. And the more he can carry Islamic patterns and script into everyday visual culture, the better, he says.





With the mural finished, the Elmhurst School artists pose for a group photo with Teakster. "The arts are for everyone," he says. "It makes our community stronger." **LOWER** Jealous Gallery, London, 2020.

OPPOSITE (6) AND LOWER: COURTESY OF TEAKSTER

"I want to really push this movement, this minirenaissance of Islamic art, reusing Islamic art for modern times," he says. "I would love to see this art go mainstream, to see an ordinary ad for an ordinary product that uses Islamic design because it's beautiful." Art, he adds, "can break down barriers better than any interfaith dialog. Islamic art is not beautiful because it's Islamic. It's beautiful because it's universal."

Near the playground at Elmhurst School, as the students start cleaning up, their freshly painted mural complete, a few of them remark on how much they enjoyed the afternoon.

**"I believe as an artist you have a social responsibility to bring people together."**

—TEAKSTER

"The best thing is everyone gets to collaborate, and nobody feels left out," says one girl. Another adopts a serious tone: "I like using spray cans without it being illegal."

"It's inspirational," says Needham, "to have such a great, positive role model of someone who's gone out from here into the world and made it a more beautiful place." 🌍



**Matthew Teller** ([matthewteller.com](http://matthewteller.com)) is a UK-based writer, journalist, broadcaster and documentarian for the BBC and other international media. He contributes regularly to *AramcoWorld*. Follow him on Twitter @matthewteller. Also based in the UK, **Andrew**



**Shaylor** ([shaylorphoto.com](http://shaylorphoto.com)) is a freelance photographer who has worked for dozens of clients and publications for more than 25 years.



**Related articles at [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com)**

eL Seed Jul / Aug 2017

Djerba street art Jan / Feb 2015

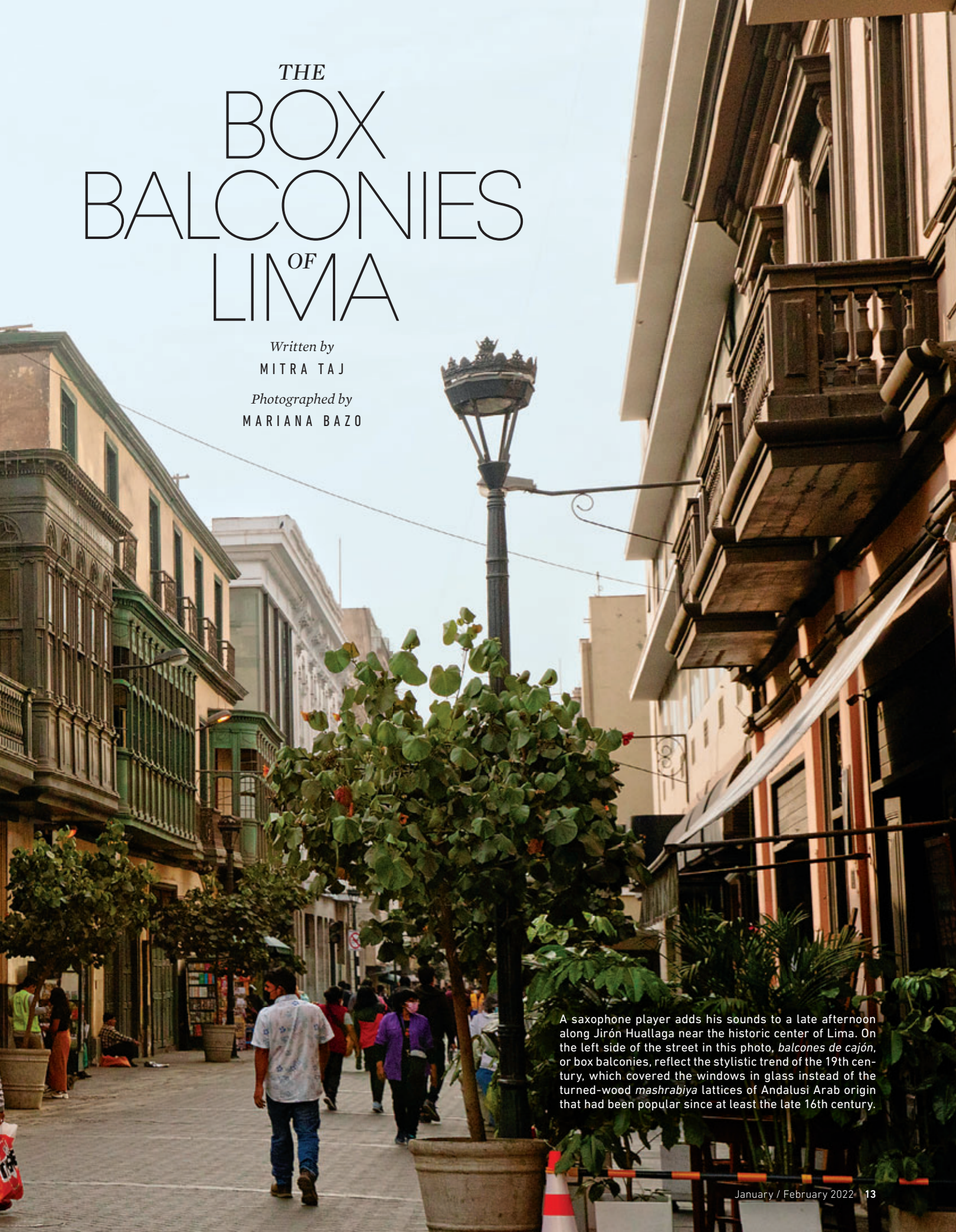




# THE BOX BALCONIES OF LIMA

Written by  
MITRA TAJ

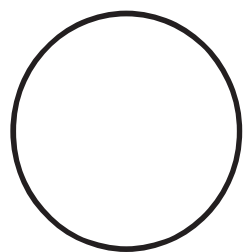
Photographed by  
MARIANA BAZO

A photograph of a street in Lima, Peru, showing historic buildings with balconies and a street lamp. The street is paved with cobblestones and has a large potted tree in the foreground. People are walking on the street, and a street lamp with a crown-shaped top is visible. The buildings have ornate balconies and windows.

A saxophone player adds his sounds to a late afternoon along Jirón Huallaga near the historic center of Lima. On the left side of the street in this photo, *balcones de cajón*, or box balconies, reflect the stylistic trend of the 19th century, which covered the windows in glass instead of the turned-wood *mashrabiya* lattices of Andalusí Arab origin that had been popular since at least the late 16th century.



Openwork wooden screens remain on the balconies of the Palace of the Archbishop, at the heart of the capital's historic center that in 1991 UNESCO designated as a World Heritage Site. In between the balcony's baroque-influenced pilasters, the design displays three elements from the architectural vocabulary of al-Andalus, or Muslim Spain: an arabesque pattern on the window shutters, turned-wood balustrades, and a rectilinear pattern along the balcony's base. The windows and balustrades derive from turned-wood lattice screens, called *mashrabiya* in Arabic, that developed in Egypt around the 12th century and became popular throughout the Islamic world, including al-Andalus. The screens blocked sun while admitting abundant light and ventilation; they also offered privacy to the occupants and an expression of social status to passersby.



nly a few hundred *balcones de cajón*, or wooden box balconies, remain in Lima. Usually cantilevered out over the street, often ornate in design, most look out on the bustle of streets that grid the Peruvian capital's historic

center. Until the mid-20th century there were thousands, so many they became part of Lima's identity and part of what in 1991 led UNESCO to designate Lima's center a World Heritage Site. Mostly from the late 16th through the 18th century, Lima's families of means—and particularly women—used the wooden-screen balconies to discreetly keep their eyes on the streets from within the privacy of their homes. From the outside, all passersby saw were the designs of the

balconies, which expressed the social status of their owners.

Behind their Spanish name, these wooden balconies may have come to Lima with its Spanish colonizers and founders, but they arrived with much longer roots.

"A lot of the colonial architecture that we're so proud of is Islamic in origin, including box balconies," says Nelson Manrique, a historian with the Pontifical Catholic University of Peru (PUCP). "They disappeared from Spain but endured in Lima."



The box balconies represent what Manrique describes as a transplanted branch of an architectural ancestor: *mashrabiya* balconies, so named in Arabic for their lattice screens of lathe-turned wood assembled into often intricate, ornate geometric patterns installed on balconies that overhung—and thus shaded—the street. The practice developed around the 12th century in Egypt,





In the historic district, wooden mashrabiya screens appear also on balconies flanking the baroque portal of the Palace of Torre Tagle, which dates to the early 18th century and is now the headquarters of the Foreign Ministry of Peru. In 1910 Peruvian painter Teófilo Castillo Guas selected the palace's facade as an emblematic backdrop for his nostalgic depiction of a colonial-era procession, **RIGHT, LOWER** Visitors explore the balcony of the Palace of the Archbishop with its view of Jirón Carabaya and the Plaza de Armas.





Across the street from and stylistically reflecting the Palace of Torre Tagle, Goyeneche House, built in 1771, also flanks a baroque stone entrance with *mudéjar* balconies. Although they have been remodeled with glass, they maintain traditional proportions and structures of the mashrabiya balconies of the Arab world and al-Andalus: waist-high, solid walls topped with two layers of wrap-around windows, cantilevered over the streets on strong timbers.

and from there it spread across Islamic lands including the Levant, the Arabian Peninsula, Anatolia and the southern Iberian Peninsula. Four centuries later in colonial Latin America, box balconies made only brief appearances in other cities, notably Mexico City: Only in Lima did they develop into an enduring local tradition. With interiors lined with cushions or decorated with woodwork, tiles and lanterns, they provided ventilation, a bit of extra space and a private view. From the inside, the streets were visible through the mashrabiya screens, but from below and outside, everything behind the lattices lay in shadows, invisible.

“The Western balcony is made for showing oneself, for being part of the public spectacle,” says Manrique. “The Islamic balcony is conceived so those inside aren’t seen, in particular women, who were expected to avoid being seen by men outside their families.”

Lima’s remaining box balconies now grace facades from restored colonial mansions to fast-food restaurants, shops and other businesses. They vary from a handful of early, Islamic-influenced *mudéjar* designs using arabesque and geometric patterns

to a majority of later, European-influenced ones in which the mashrabiya was replaced with glass.

The *mudéjar* style, while rare these days, remains on some of the city’s most notable colonial buildings, such as the Palace of Torre Tagle, the late-18th-century palace commissioned by Don José Bernardo de Tagle y Bracho, 1st Marquis of Torre Tagle and treasurer of the Royal Spanish Fleet. The exterior is constructed of stone and boasts dark wood and carved wooden columns with materials imported from Spain and Central America. Its pair of mashrabiya box balconies flank its grand baroque portal, and they much resemble their historic contemporaries in North Africa and the Levant.

Inside some of the larger buildings with box balconies, other rooms, too, at times incorporated *mudéjar* influences. One especially notable example is the wooden dome of Lima’s 17th-century Convent of San Francisco, whose geometric star pattern resembles that of Seville’s *mudéjar* Alcazar Real, also known as al-Qasr al-Muriq (The Verdant Palace).

It was a natural evolution then that this feature would also

**“There are so many  
and they are so long  
that they seem like  
streets in the air.”**

—Friar Antonio de la Calancha, 1638



A three-story stack of balconies on Jirón Huallaga shows the lower balcony with a simple mashrabiya of wooden slats and the two upper ones with glazed windows. The frequency of earthquakes in Lima led to widespread collapses of houses with balconies, and after two particularly devastating quakes, in 1687 and 1746, colonial authorities tried to restrict homes to a single story, but they were ignored. **LOWER** A balcony extends across the full facade of one of the oldest large homes in Lima, the Casa del Oidor (House of the Listener), so called for its early use by a royal representative who registered public complaints. Long balconies like this were frequently built on multifamily dwellings to create common space or hallways connecting living spaces.

appear in Lima, says José Beingolea, dean of the architecture school at Peru's National University of Engineering, who notes that over time in Lima, mudéjar designs gradually gave way to European ones, and as the balconies proliferated, their prestige declined.

"They started to be used as long 'hallways in the air' to connect small apartments in buildings occupied by multiple families," Beingolea says, echoing a phrase penned in 1638 by Italian chronicler Friar Antonio de la Calancha, who called the

box balconies "streets in the air." The first box-balcony artisans, Beingolea believes, were most likely not themselves of Muslim heritage—*moriscos*. Though in Spain moriscos were known as some of the best carpenters and masons, in Lima the builders were probably Spanish emigrants who had learned the styles.

It's unclear also exactly when Lima's first box balcony was built, but de la Calancha's observation was preceded by the notes of another Italian visitor, Francisco Scarletti, who also remarked upon the number of balconies. He, however, chose to liken them to Catholic confessional boxes, which also can use wooden lattice screens.

In a tradition begun by the authorities representing the Spanish Crown who lived in homes with box balconies, several presidents following Peru's independence lived with them too. These included Justo Figuerola, who in 1843 and 1844 served as the nation's 18th and 21st presidents, respectively. According to the 1872 book, *Peruvian Traditions*, by Ricardo Palma, Figuerola quit his first term by having his daughter toss his presidential sash from their box balcony to an angry crowd.

Adriana Scaletti, a Peruvian architect and professor at PUCP, says box balconies were such a cherished part of the homes of the upper classes centuries ago that owners resisted efforts by authorities to phase them





By the 19th and 20th centuries, glass had taken the place of mashrabiya screens, and woodwork on lower walls was simple or elaborate depending on what the owner could afford. Along Jirón Junín, **ABOVE**, two balconies show spare design: ribbed pilasters offer a nod to European neoclassicism, and along the top a winding-pattern band faintly echoes mudéjar influence. **LOWER** While they share many stylistic elements, few box balconies in Lima are precisely alike. **OPPOSITE** Along Jirón de la Unión, a floral flourish in the top register of windows help enliven a wraparound balcony across the street from the Plazuela de la Merced, one of the sites where in 1821 Peru declared independence from Spain. **LOWER** A view from a box balcony on Jirón Conde de Superunda.

out. They had remained popular among elites in Lima for the same reasons they were used by women: they allowed observance of public life without being seen. Like tinted windows and sunglasses today, box balconies not only offered clandestine viewing, they did so with VIP flair.

Following major earthquakes that struck Lima in 1687 and again in 1746, the Peruvian viceroys attempted to ban two-story buildings altogether, along with the balconies, if only to reduce the risk of deadly collapses. Both bans were largely ignored. In 1746, Peruvian elites waged a campaign against Viceroy José Manso de Velasco's plans to rebuild the city with only one-story structures and forced him to shelve the plans. Homeowners argued the balconies could resist future tremors. They also snubbed single-story houses as lower-class—especially indigenous—expressions.

“They wanted to stand out, show we’re

Spanish, and what better way to do that at the time than with big balconies on the facade of your house,” she says. “Balconies had







Built at the turn of the 19th century by a Spanish merchant and recently restored, the balconies along the facade of the Casa Osambela reflect an entirely European, neoclassical style. **LOWER** Along Jirón Ancash, a balcony reflects an eclectic 20th-century style. The interplay of similarities and differences in Lima's balconies led 20th-century Peruvian composer Luis Antonio Meza to describe them as "homogeneous and harmonic."

really become status symbols that elites were willing to defend. It didn't matter what the viceroy wanted or if there was an earthquake that killed a lot of people."

So box balconies stayed, and they even saw a revival when neocolonial styles became fashionable in the first decades of the 20th century. The unmistakably neomudéjar balconies of the Palace of the Archbishop, across from Peru's presidential palace near the Plaza de Armas, were designed in the early 1900s by a Polish architect.

Another earthquake struck in 1940, and it too accelerated demand for more modern construction in the historic district. Bruno Roselli, an Italian immigrant from Florence and a professor of art at Lima's University of San Marcos, spearheaded an outspoken campaign in the 1950s to preserve box balconies, earning him an informal title as "the defender of the balconies." For two decades he tried to stop what he called the "massacre" of box balconies, even going door to door to lobby for support and

funding, comparing their architectural importance to that of the Eiffel Tower in Paris or the Statue of Liberty in New York. He was by and large unsuccessful. Many balconies were torn down, although on some buildings newer and stronger ones





**TOP** Framed within the colonial baroque facade of the Palace of the Archbishop, box balconies today help make the building one of Lima’s top tourist attractions and a recognition of the legacies of al-Andalus layered into Lima’s nearly 600-year history. **RIGHT** The Foreign Ministry of Peru’s Director of Cultural Affairs Jhonatan Soto Aguirre shows how light plays through the eight-pointed star pattern, called *nudjumi* in Arabic, of the mashrabiya inside the Palace of Torre Tagle.

were put up in their place. After his death in 1970, his efforts continued to inspire preservation of the balconies, including the municipality’s “adopt a balcony” program in the 1990s that connected private financing with restoration efforts.

As a result, most of Lima’s balcones de cajón today were built in the 19th century, during the construction expansion that took place while the city was aflush with cash from global sales of guano, the fertilizer made from the excrement of sea birds

that Peru exported until it was replaced by nitrate-based fertilizer.

For Beingoalea, Lima’s box balconies tell a story of a transcontinental cultural journey, one in which those who came to Lima found practicality and elegance as well as breeze, light

and privacy. It’s also a story that harks back to times when sitting on one’s balcony provided entertainment and social life, an excuse

**After the earthquake of 1940, preservation activist Bruno Roselli fought to preserve hundreds of balconies, often unsuccessfully, as symbols of Lima’s historic *mestizaje*, or cultural syncretism.**



to be in the thick of movement and discussion without being seen.

“The box balcony succeeded in Lima because of our curiosity about the lives of others, and the desire to see without being seen—to snoop,” Beingoalea says. 🌐



**Mitra Taj** is an independent reporter and columnist based in Lima. **Mariana Bazo** also lives in Lima, where she is a freelance photographer. She was a photojournalist for Reuters for more than 25 years. Her photos have been published in newspapers from *The New York Times* to *China Daily*. Follow her on Twitter @mbazo and Instagram @marianabazo.



**Related articles at [aramcoworld.com](https://www.aramcoworld.com)**  
Alhambriismo: Jan / Feb 2021  
Mashrabiya: Jul / Aug 1999



**See more of Lima’s box balconies at [aramcoworld.com](https://www.aramcoworld.com).**





# SEA OF TEARS, GARDEN OF MEMORY

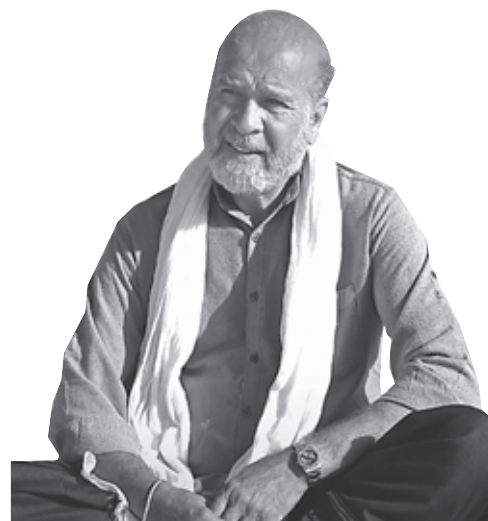
WRITTEN BY JULIET HIGHET

PHOTOGRAPHS COURTESY OF RACHID KORAÏCHI / OCTOBER GALLERY



Under the names *Tears That Taste of the Sea* and *The Garden of Africa*, contemporary artist Rachid Koraïchi in 2021 opened, respectively, an exhibition and a cemetery. The exhibition of sculpture, calligraphy and ceramics was shown in London, and the cemetery—owned, designed and built by Koraïchi—lies on the outskirts of the town of Zarzis, in southern Tunisia, along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea. Both exhibition and cemetery are characterized by migration, memory and mourning as well as empathy, dignity and peace.

“The Garden of Africa” is both the title of this etching, **OPPOSITE**, and the name of the cemetery in Zarzis, Tunisia, where the gate, **LEFT**, requires visitors to stoop in a gesture of respect for the deceased within. Of the meter-high etching, Koraïchi explains, “symbolically, the rectangular figures enclose real-world elements, while the circle at the center, representing infinity, reveals elements from another realm. The isolated figure caught in the center of the circle stands at a crossroads ... where this Earthly journey ends and another voyage begins.”



Along the Mediterranean shores around Zarzis, currents have been washing ashore remains of hundreds of people—most of them unidentified and unidentifiable—who perished on their voyages “fleeing poverty, climate change [and] war,” says Koraïchi. After visiting in 2018, he decided to buy land and build The Garden of Africa. **LOWER** Koraïchi places a plaque on a grave site.



The Garden of Africa opened on June 9, 2021, as a charitable burial ground, a creatively designed final resting place for some of the hundreds of refugees and migrants whose fates in the nearby waters have become known only when sea currents, which are particularly strong around Zarzis,

have carried their bodies to the shore. The Garden of Africa is therefore “a place of remembrance, filled with fragrant plants that recall Paradise as described in the Qur’an,” says Koraïchi.

Attending the opening ceremony at the invitation of Tunisian President Kais Saïed, UNESCO Director-General Audrey Azoulay afterward stated on Twitter that Koraïchi’s initiative “offers beauty to those who did not have a grave. His gesture testifies to our common humanity and says that everyone has the right to this dignity.” According to the International Organization for Migration (IOM), in 2020 more than 1,000 people drowned attempting to cross the Mediterranean from North Africa to Europe. Azoulay and Koraïchi were joined at the ceremony by representatives of the country’s three major historic faith traditions of Islam, Christianity and Judaism to emphasize the nonsectarian, humanitarian mission of the project. Azoulay also presented a bronze sculpture called The Tree of Peace.

The cemetery is set in an olive orchard, into which one enters this “paradise,” as Koraïchi calls it, through a gate painted brilliant yellow, representing the intensity of the African sun. The gate intentionally offers a low portal so that each visitor must stoop to pass through in a gesture of deference to those who took to sea in the hope of a brighter future that never came.

Two large alabaster stelae, which stand one on either side of the gate, serve as “symbolic, talismanic guardians of those who pray for the dead,” says Koraïchi, referring to the families and friends of those lost. The stelae replicate ones used by the artist’s family, whose lineage goes back to descendants of the Prophet Muhammad and who themselves migrated to North Africa via Kairouan, which they helped found in today’s Tunisia, some 350 kilometers north of Zarzis, and eventually settled farther west in Algeria.

From the gate, paths paved with antique ornamental tiles from Nabeul, the Tunisian town long famous for ceramic



designs, line rows of burial plots. The paths are bordered by aromatic, therapeutic herbs such as algave, aloe vera and calendula, together with fragrant flowers such as jasmine, night-blooming cacti and red bougainvillea. Bitter oranges have been planted to symbolize both the hardship of death and the sweetness of the afterlife. Five olive trees have been designated to represent Islam’s five pillars, and similarly, 12 vines represent the 12 disciples of Jesus. The central path leads to a domed room dedicated to inter-faith prayer and reflection.

The Garden of Africa has its origin in 2018, when Koraïchi’s daughter Aïcha read on social media that Mediterranean currents had been washing an unusual number of bodies onto beaches around Zarzis, and that many were not receiving burials. Daughter and father visited Zarzis later that year, and what they found saddened them

**“I wanted them to rest  
in an honorable place.”**

**—RACHID KORAÏCHI**

deeply. “I couldn’t stand the thought that people fleeing poverty, climate change, war and COVID were ending up in landfill. I wanted them to rest in an honorable place,” Koraïchi comments. In addition, the experience evoked the grievous personal loss of Koraïchi’s elder brother Mohammed, who in 1962 was swept to sea by a rip tide and never found.

Koraïchi took initiative as both a humanitarian and an artist. “I bought land there, a 2500-square-meter plot to turn into a cemetery:



Paths tiled with designs from the renowned Tunisian craft town of Nabeul lead through the cemetery, where a portal frames one of five olive trees that represent the five pillars of Islam. **ABOVE, LEFT** The Garden of Africa is designed to accommodate the remains of up to 600 people. **RIGHT** The Tree of Peace, a sculpture by artist Hedva Ser, was presented to Koraïchi by UNESCO at the cemetery’s opening on June 9, 2021.

The Garden of Africa. It’s a huge task, which I’m funding myself, with no governmental help,” Koraïchi says. This has included not only planting, building and decorating, but also raising the ground level so that graves, when dug, would not reach the water table. For each refugee who is buried, the small staff at The Garden of Africa obtains and keeps a record of a DNA sample “in the hope that one day we may be able to identify them through DNA provided by relatives,” he explains. Building this haven and covering its operating expenses, including salaries for employees such as a live-in guardian and gravediggers, Koraïchi emphasizes, “is like offering a gift to a loved one. It’s not the price that matters. It is how much you want to offer the gift.”

Intrinsically linked to The Garden of Africa was *Tears That Taste of the Sea*, a four-part installation exhibition that opened in

spring 2021 at October Gallery. The four installations, each in different media, echo aspects of the cemetery in both their emotionally powerful forms as well as their evocations of loss and compassion.

Three large, black openwork sculptures, made of corten steel, were lit so that their sparse, fluid shapes could throw delicate shadows onto the white walls: This is a device familiar to Koraïchi, who has played on the transience of shadows to evoke the ephemeral character of life that contrasts with the permanence and rigidity of the steel medium.

Of these sculptural forms, which reference both calligraphy and bodies in motion, Koraïchi, now 74, explains that his background, too, is one that mixes traditions as well as media: “My work is rooted in the Islamic tradition, but I studied art in the Western mode, and I was trained in metalwork, pottery, sculpture and painting.”

As a result, his range of media has, over decades, stretched further to textiles, including

paintings on silk, canvas and paper, and to work in wood, bronze and steel. “When I was born, Algeria was a department of France. My country has been colonized by different peoples over thousands of years—Phoenicians, Romans, Syrians and then the French.” But going further back, he adds, there are rock paintings in caves in the Sahara region of Tassili n’Ajjjer that date from 5,000 BCE and earlier whose iconography, vibrancy and delicacy enchanted him.

The second installation of the show comprised seven blue-and-white ceramic lachrymatory vases, or “tear gatherers.” Koraïchi says that it was at the Bardo Museum in Tunis that he first saw small, fragile vials of antique glass—precious and intimate repositories—made to store tears shed while mourning someone beloved, such as a relative. “I was inspired by people who had

made such delicate, little glass containers, such as the ancient Phoenicians, also the Romans, the Greeks, the Iranians and later the Victorians in Britain, people in a multitude of places.” To him, it spoke of “a history of love.”

The tear gatherers he has made, however, are each half a meter tall. “To reflect the scale of death in the Mediterranean, the millions of uncollected tears, I made giant versions of the tiny bottles,” he says, “with four handles that could be held by both a mother and a father. The blue inscriptions on the surface of the vases symbolize the sea.”

The third element of the exhibition was a large etching, 108.5 by 76 centimeters. Koraïchi titled it “The Garden of Africa”—like the cemetery—because the etching offers a similar story: “Symbolically, the rectangular figures enclose real-world elements, while the circle at the center, representing infinity, reveals elements from another realm. The isolated figure caught in the center of the circle stands at a crossroads, suggesting a traveler who arrives at that place of destiny where this Earthly journey ends and another voyage begins.”

In early 2020, when Koraïchi exhibited in Pakistan as part of Lahore Biennale 02, he taught an etching workshop to students at the National College of Art, and he arranged for all the required materials to be sent to Lahore. He selected *The Garden of Africa* as the workshop’s theme to emphasize how different countries can be linked by a contemporary crisis, especially since some of the migrants whose journeys ended so tragically near Zarzis may have set out from Pakistan. In addition to his large work, on which students collaborated with him, he mentored some 70 student prints.

The fourth element of *Tears That Taste of the Sea* was a series of seven rectangular paintings on canvas, each on a rendition of a handkerchief, framed in black. “I was looking for something to accompany the lachrymatory vases that would extend the idea of a chronicle of intense emotions,” the artist explains. “Handkerchiefs imply softer, more pliant materials and implicate the powerful sense of smell. Today’s handkerchiefs have little value and are easily replaced by disposable tissues.” He indicates how in the past they were more symbolically significant, regarded for example among “love’s elaborate ruses,” which by absorbing traces of perfume, lipstick, perspiration as well as the salty residue of tears, they become palimpsests of intimate details in an individual’s life.

The painting series that followed is called *Handkerchiefs of Hope*, since as Koraïchi suggests, “If we could translate the encoded messages within them, we would discover signs of love



On show at London’s October Gallery last year, *Tears That Taste of the Sea* was made up of four major installations: **ABOVE**, ceramic vases, each half a meter tall, were shaped to resemble small “tear-gatherer” (lachrymatory) vases. Koraïchi made each with four handles, one for each hand of each parent of a person lost at sea.

## Across media, Koraïchi has developed a spiritually charged, personal calligraphy.

and joy, as well as tears of loss, which are inseparably linked, since we shed most tears when we lose what we love the most.”

Born in 1947 in Ain Beida, Algeria, Koraïchi recalls that from a young age he was fascinated by the Arabic calligraphy he would find at home in old books whose pages were often illuminated with flourishes of arabesque. Beginning at age 3, before his regular day of school began, he attended a *zaouia* (a school for Qur’anic studies), where letters were an essential component of the curriculum. During an interview with October Gallery Director of Special Projects Gerard Houghton published in 2016, he explained: “Wherever my gaze fell was alive with the written

word. My way of approaching the creative process mixes writing and drawing together, as in a gestural movement, like a visual musical score. For me, writing can only be sacred in origin. It is the visual sign that denotes divine activity.”

Venetia Porter, curator of the Department of Middle East and North Africa at the British Museum since 1986, describes Koraïchi’s work as “writing passion.” She

included it in her 2008 exhibition, *Word into Art: Artists of the Modern Middle East*, which opened eyes and minds to the richness of calligraphic art. In Koraïchi’s particular, personal “alphabet,” letters become symbols and signs, and vice versa. Some are imaginary, like magical squares; others draw from forms used in Berber and Tuareg Tifinagh characters, as well as Chinese and Japanese ideograms. In effect, Koraïchi has developed a language of his own in which any medium, from black steel sculpture to gold-thread embroidery on silk, become his own spiritually charged calligraphy.

Koraïchi’s formal art education began in Algiers at the *École des Beaux-Arts*, and in 1971, aged 24, he moved to Paris. There he studied at several institutions including the *École Nationale*



Also on view in Koraïchi's *Tears That Taste of the Sea* exhibition were acrylic-on-black-canvas paintings from his series *Handkerchiefs of Hope*. These were inspired, he says, by a search for a type of personal item that would "extend the idea of a chronicle of intense emotions," and convey "signs of love and joy, as well as tears of loss, which are inseparably linked." **RIGHT** One of the exhibition's three large, corten steel openwork sculptures from Koraïchi's series *The Watchers* stood in the gallery, echoed by its shadow. **LOWER** The interfaith chapel in The Garden of Africa offers visitors a quiet place for reflection.

Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, interacting with a cosmopolitan art world and developing his own approach to contemporary, international media.

While The Garden of Africa may be his most ambitious project to date, it is not unusual for his works to take years to finish: His homage to the 13th-century mystical poets Rumi and Ibn 'Arabi, an installation titled *Path of Roses*, took from 1995 to 2005 to produce. In projects like this, he often combines materials and even at times collaborates with artisans in multiple places. For example,

for his 2002 series *Seven Variations of Indigo*, he collaborated with Fadila Barrada, a Moroccan embroiderer, as well as expert Syrian linen artisans. The result was a series of silk-screened banners and squares on which inked wooden stamps—some antique and some carved by Koraïchi—were used to produce intricate patterns.

In 2011 Koraïchi's selection of embroidered cloth banners from a series called *The Invisible Masters* won the internationally prestigious Jameel Prize for contemporary Islamic art. In his winning sequence, he used calligraphy, symbols and ciphers inspired by a range of scripts, languages and cultures to explore the lives and legacies of 14 great mystics of Islam. The Jameel Prize jury commended him for "how he had made his great spiritual and intellectual lineage accessible to all through the graphic language he had created out of his artistic heritage."

October Gallery Director Chili Hawes adds her own accolade for Koraïchi's "lifetime effort to convey, on the one hand, the historical developments of the broad world of Islam and, on the other, the expression of great beauty of the cycles of life from birth to death."

With *Tears That Taste of the Sea* and *The Garden of Africa*, Koraïchi more than responds, more than inspires: He creates opportunities in which individuals, communities, organizations and governments can join him in cultivating a more empathetic future. 🌍



Trained as a photographer, **Juliet Hight** lived in East and West Africa, as well as India. In Nigeria she began writing and later editing magazines and books from the UK. Widely published on travel, the arts and culture, she is the author of *Frankincense: Oman's Gift to the World* (Prestel, 2006) and a specialist in traditional and contemporary Arab, African and South Asian cultures and heritage.



**Related articles at aramcoworld.com**

Tunisia: May / June 2020; Sep / Oct 2019

Jameel Prize: Sep / Oct 2016



# CENTRAL ASIAN WOMEN HIT THE US ROAD

WRITTEN BY J. TREVOR WILLIAMS  
PHOTOGRAPHED BY BEAR GUTIERREZ

Looking out at the white sands and glistening waters of the Gulf of Mexico, Arailym Mergenova remembers as a child peering westward from Aktau, Kazakhstan, to the Caspian Sea disappearing over the horizon.

“When I opened my door, I saw the sea every time,” she says.

As a girl in the mid-1990s, she traveled abroad with her parents to Turkey and the UK, but Hollywood stoked her imagination and expanded the boundaries of her wanderlust. “I dreamed about seeing every state in the USA.”

After graduating university with a major in economics, she landed in Panama City Beach, Florida, thanks to a US student-exchange visa often used to help tourist towns fill jobs in the

**RIGHT** “It’s true that we were nomadic people hundreds of years ago, but everybody chooses their own reason to be a truck driver.”

—Arailym Mergenova, Panama City Beach, Florida

**OPPOSITE** “I look at it [trucking] as a spiritual way of being a nomad—seeing places, seeing people, expanding your boundaries as much as you can.”

—Aidana Tokenova, Denver, Colorado

summer. While the reality was less glamorous than Hollywood, the tourists were plentiful and the ocean familiar.

In 2015, after two summers working in Florida, Mergenova, by then also married, returned to Panama City Beach for good with her husband. There, while servicing hotel rooms and picking up other jobs, Mergenova saw more clearly than ever how in the US an entrepreneurial spirit could outrun an education.

Although she says her next career move was not intentional, Mergenova concedes that it may have been provoked by an unconscious inclination that complemented her immigrant hustle.

“It’s true that we were nomadic people hundreds of years ago, but everybody chooses their own reason to be a truck driver,” she says.

At age 23, after two months of study, Mergenova passed the State of Florida’s Commercial Driver License exam.

Women truckers are rare in the US and even more so when counting those who are also immigrants. Mergenova is however part of a growing cadre from traditionally Turkic nomadic cultures of Central Asia, where the post-Soviet borders of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Turkmenistan were largely superimposed over cultures that for thousands of years have found identity in their searches for pasture.

Some acknowledge readily how they carry this heritage across continents and behind the wheel. Aidana Tokenova, a 29-year-old trucker-in-training from Nur-Sultan, Kazakhstan, says it was when her mother didn’t stop her from seeking higher education





**“That’d be really good for me, and I know how to run this business.”**

—Aisha Meirmanova, in Denver, Colorado, explaining her dream of using earnings from driving 18-wheelers to open a food truck serving coffee and breakfast.

in the US that Tokenova began to self-identify as a “free spirit.”

While the main allure is the paycheck, she says, the prospect of hitting the road with her husband, untethered by rent and other obligations, hits home.

“I look at it in the spiritual way of being a nomad, seeing places, seeing people, expanding your boundaries as much as you can,” she says. “It’s all I’ve got left—my last name and my heritage, since I’m so far from home.”

For others like Mergenova, such desire to roam feels only tenuously linked to this history; it feels more like a pragmatic pursuit that seems downright American.

“There is a lot of movement that is reminiscent of nomadism

at the same time the historical labor pool of white men was shrinking, as retirements outpaced new drivers. (Still, more than three-quarters of US truck drivers are white; only eight percent are women.)

That’s changing as Punjabis, Russians, Eastern Europeans and especially Mexicans and Central Americans get behind the wheel. In 2020, foreign-born drivers made up 16.6 percent of the total, according to the Institute for Immigration Research at George Mason University; among them, women accounted for just 4.9 percent.

That balance could change as the industry starts to see the value of women during this time of upheaval, says Ellen Voie, president and CEO of the Women in Trucking Association, a nonprofit based in Plover,

**“There is a lot of movement that is reminiscent of nomadism that is involved in modern urbanization structures.”**

—Jonathan Washington, Swarthmore College

that is involved in modern urbanization structures,” says Jonathan Washington, an expert on Kyrgyz language and culture at Swarthmore College in Pennsylvania. He explains that although, all across the Turkic-speaking cultures of Central Asia, lines between encampment, village and city are ever more blurred, it remains common for even the most urbane professionals to feel deeply linked by family and tradition to herding life. Bridging this gap requires a transit between cultural worlds.

Driving, he says, can accomplish this. But for women, in Central Asia as in the US, the industry is almost exclusively a men’s club.

When she learned about truck driving from her friend Micka, who was pulling down \$2,500 some weeks, Mergenova grew enchanted, but she also knew she’d face resistance. “Men think that if you’re a woman, you should sit at home,” she says. “Where is your husband? Why can’t he do these things? You should sit home and birth babies and cook.’ Everybody talked to me like that. It’s so heavy when women start in the trucking business.”

But the sight of her friend working in a cavernous cab of an 18-wheeler instilled confidence, and Mergenova’s husband lent her his encouragement—and went on to get his license too.

Their timing couldn’t have been better: Trucking in the US is at an inflection point amid skyrocketing delivery demand. Even before the coronavirus pandemic, the rise in e-commerce was luring drivers away from long-distance, over-the-road jobs at the



Wisconsin, that advocates for increased gender diversity in the trucking industry.

Female commercial drivers, she points out, are 20 percent less likely than their male counterparts to be involved in an accident. Women drivers also accept training easily, lead with empathy and excel at many of the customer-facing aspects of the profession, she adds. Perception remains the problem.

“People think you need to be big and burly. They think you need to be mechanically minded and you need to be away from home for days at a time, and none of those are true anymore,” Voie says, noting that trucks are so high tech now that drivers rarely touch the engines.

Women can also make an entire career out of what the industry calls “drop-and-hook,” in which the cargo never leaves the trailer, and short- and medium-haul jobs like transporting shipping containers and running waste-management routes: All mean that even women with children may start seeing this as a viable career, Voie says.

For Aisha Meirmanova, a 26-year-old mother of a year-old daughter, finding a local gig will be essential. The former flight attendant for Kazakhstan’s Air Astana lives a well-grounded life near Denver, where the dry air and mountains remind her of home.

Now in training, she hopes trucking will help her and her

**“In any [Chicago] community gathering you go to, you will find people who work in the industry.”**

—Ajar Chekirova, Lake Forest College

husband save for the future while not missing out on their daughter’s present. Maybe one day, she says, she’ll work a truck that stays parked most of the day: a food truck serving coffee and breakfast, a job that capitalizes on her experience serving customers in the skies.

“That’d be really good for me, and I know how to run this business,” she says.

Mergenova finds it hard to pinpoint why resistance to her work emerged back home. Turkic steppe culture had a reputation for flexibility in matters of gender-based labor. Although women generally covered the domestic realm and men generally handled herding duties, women always contributed to the family’s livelihood. And anytime a “male” task didn’t get done—like slaughtering sheep—women stepped up to complete it, Washington says.

Even as far back as the 14th century, famed Moroccan traveler Ibn Battuta noted the industry of women in Turkic lands and how they took on public-facing roles more readily than their counterparts elsewhere.

Perhaps as influential now is the experience of nearly a century under Soviet rule, which encouraged and expected women to

**TOP “My husband, he helps me. He’s my passenger and he’s my guide. For seven months [because of him] I haven’t received driving tickets.”**

—Amina Alykulova, Cincinnati, Ohio—where both she and her husband, Adilet Ramanov, also work as professional wrestlers.

**RIGHT “We’re all immigrants, so we’re here to do—to make money to provide bread for our families.” —Ramiz Kerimov, Chicago, Illinois**





**“You should sit home and birth babies and cook.’ Everybody talked to me like that. It’s so heavy when women start in the trucking business. ... I’m just keeping positive.”**  
—Aralym Mergenova

work, says Ajar Chekirova, a Kyrgyzstan-born assistant professor of politics at Lake Forest College, just north of Chicago, who has studied immigrant livelihoods.

Especially in Chicago, long a trucking hub thanks to its location near the center of the US, Chekirova says the industry has become popular with Central Asians. Many previously worked as taxi drivers but were pushed out when Uber came along.

“In any community gathering you go to, you will find people who work in the industry. It’s definitely very visible. It’s something that is discussed in social media groups that are not intended specifically for truckers. There you will see posts about hiring drivers, or hiring mechanics or technicians,” Chekirova says.

And in a new culture, women from the region are finding the doors unlocked.

“I don’t judge people for whatever their gender is,” says Ramiz Kerimov, 34, who runs N and N Transportation, a dispatching firm in Denver. “For me, the most important is communication.”

Of N and N Transportation’s 42 trucks, seven of which are company owned and 35 driven by owner-operators, only three are driven by women from Central Asia.

Kerimov arrived in the US in 2002 from Turkmenistan as a high schooler with his mother. He later dropped out of business school, was recruited to driving by a friend, quit after the first

**“At first it was lonely for me, but you get used to it as time goes on, and you start to socialize with other female truckers.”**

—Albina Bekicheva, Chicago

month, but then he returned to it, drawn by the prospect of the solid earnings. He bought a 2006 Freightliner Century with \$3,000 down. But his experience on the road was decidedly unromantic.

“I felt like it’s a dog’s life. You’re always in a box,” he says.

Dispatching—finding loads for owner-operators and managing back-office tasks like registration, accounting, safety compliance and cargo logs became his calling, which enabled Kerimov to participate in the industry without being away all the time.

“Trucking does sometimes divorce people,” he says. “I want my son to see there is a dad next to him.”

Mergenova, however, embraced the lifestyle from the first mile. While waiting on a load, she says, she’d often forgo a ho-hum truck stop and find instead a nearby Walmart—where she’d hit the nail salon and touch up her makeup. “People were always asking, ‘Why are you doing your eyelashes? Nobody’s seeing you in the truck.’ I’d say, ‘Are you kidding? I’m doing it for myself, not for somebody else. I need to feel like my real self.’”

Along the way, she also fulfilled her bucket-list dream of traveling to all 48 contiguous US states, and she used the downtime to plan, listen to audiobooks and paint. Two years in, she and her husband bought their own trucks. Blending her loves of travel and photography, she posted bright, color-coordinated photos of herself and her experiences on Instagram and amassed more than 75,000 followers. In February 2020, Kazakh website BaigeNews ran an article about her titled “Trucker Lady.” A few criticisms followed, but to her the important comments came from



“When you’re out on the road by yourself, you encounter a lot of different situations—anything can happen, and it was interesting to show people how that happens.”

—Elnura Moldokadyrova, Chicago

women who said she’d become an inspiration.

Mergenova also found a source of encouragement along the way: Elnura Moldokadyrova, a former television journalist from Kyrgyzstan who now counts more than 201,000 followers on her YouTube channel, *Kyrgyzka v amerike* (Kyrgyz girl in America).

Moldokadyrova’s forays into social media—and, later, trucking—started in 2017 when she and her husband, Renat Shamudinov, moved to Chicago. With only basic skills in English but many connections in the Kyrgyz community, she recalls rejections from 15 restaurant jobs. She began driving for DoorDash and Uber Eats and did this for a year before discovering free English courses and conversation partners on YouTube.

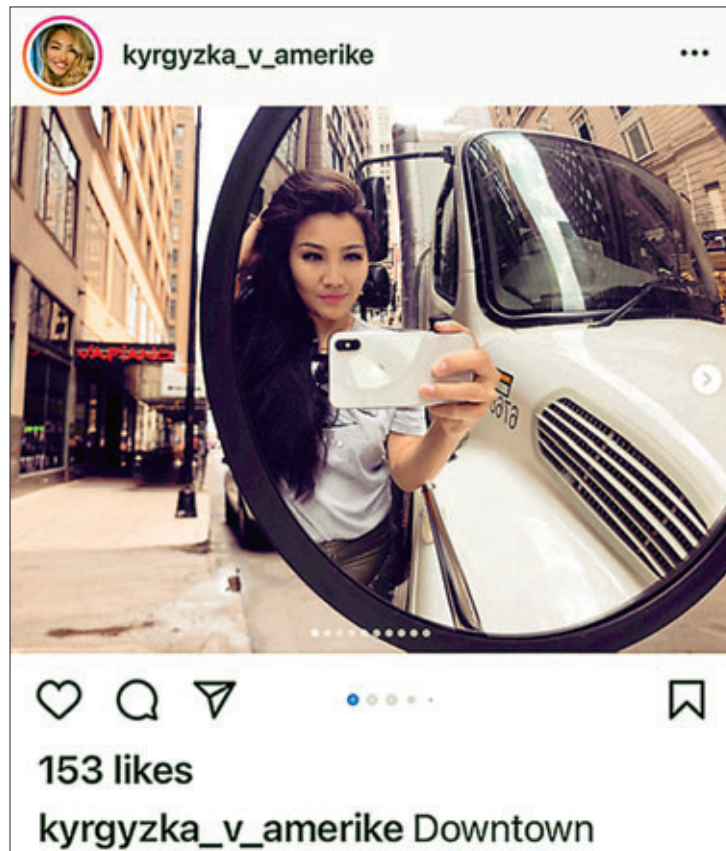
Educated as a journalist, she also began profiling the lives of Russian- and Kyrgyz-speaking immigrants. Among her most-popular posts were videos of women truck drivers.

A friend seeking to create his own trucking venture took note of Moldokadyrova’s social media prowess and approached her and Shamudinov about a partnership. With their help, in a matter of months, he recruited 30 drivers.

Eventually, Moldokadyrova and Shamudinov decided to start their own trucking outfit, and between Uber fares Moldokadyrova studied for the written CDL exam to join her husband as a driver.

However, she soon found success at something she enjoyed more: She now works as a full-time social media influencer. But she remains connected to her fellow women behind the wheel via a WhatsApp group where more than 70 female drivers from Central Asia continue to share experiences, advice and camaraderie.

One member of the group, Albina Bekicheva, 34, joined after arriving from Kazakhstan three years ago. With the support of the online community, Bekicheva started driver training and, license in hand, settled into driving.



**“People think you need to be big and burly. They think you need to be mechanically minded and you need to be away from home for days at a time, and none of that is true anymore.”**

—Ellen Voie, Women in Trucking Association

clean, well-lit warehouse to another. With so many companies clamoring for drivers, job security feels high.

But other roads, too, beckon. At home in Florida, as she prepares to hang up from a phone interview, ambient cooing from

“At first it was lonely for me, but you get used to it as time goes on, and you also start to socialize with other female truckers. We call each other on the phone a lot,” Bekicheva says. The conversations veer from practical, like pointers on replacing tire treads, to personal. Apps like Zenly and Live360 facilitate in-person meetups in cities across the country.

Bekicheva plans to start her own business one day, but for now, she is content driving for the aptly named company Modern Nomad, Inc., which is run by Shamudinov.

For Mergenova’s part, driving has become easier, now that she owns her white 2015 Freightliner Cascadia and can pick and choose routes that—ideally—lead from one

driving has become easier, now that she owns her white 2015 Freightliner Cascadia and can pick and choose routes that—ideally—lead from one

her infant daughter fills the room. Now 29, she says she’s ready to get back to driving, confident that she’ll find a balance between work and family.

“I try to only remember the good things throughout the day, like a smile,

when someone opens a door for me, or when someone gave me a compliment,” she says. “When you pay attention to the happy things, happy things have a way of pulling you in.” 🌍



**J. Trevor Williams** is a global business journalist based in Atlanta where he serves as publisher of the online international news site, *Global Atlanta* ([globalatlanta.com](http://globalatlanta.com)). Follow him on Twitter @jtrevorwilliams.

**Bear Gutierrez** (@bear.gutierrez) is a Pulitzer Prize-winning photographer based in Denver, who is also a frequent teacher and mentor.



#### Related articles at [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com)

Kazakhstan: Sep / Oct 2021; Jul / Aug 2019

Kyrgyzstan: Jan / Feb 2019; Sep / Oct 2016

Middle East trucking: Nov / Dec 1977



# ALICATADO



WRITTEN BY  
Richard Henry and Adam Williamson

ART COURTESY OF  
Art of Islamic Pattern



Multicolored tiles seem to swirl through space in this *alicatado* (cut-tile) pattern produced in the 14th century by Nasrid artisans on a wall of the Court of the Myrtles in the Alhambra palace in Granada, Spain. The Arabic root of the Spanish *alicatado* is *al-qata*, “the cut.”

The Nasrid palaces of the Alhambra in Granada, Spain, dating from the 13th to the 15th century, represent a high point in the cultural expressions of al-Andalus, or Muslim Spain, and of classical Islamic civilizations more generally. The building complex contains an extraordinary variety of designs rendered in stone, stucco, wood and tiles. Many are unique, and they have inspired artists from around the world. Among them was early 20th-century Dutch artist M. C. Escher, who sketched the tile design presented here and drew much geometric inspiration from the Alhambra.

For the first of the six pattern designs in this series, we chose a lively, curvilinear *alicatado*, as a cut-tile design is called in Spanish. (In Arabic it is called *zillij*.) This pattern appears on large panels of tiles glazed in blues, greens, ochres, blacks and whites set along the lower parts of the walls of the Alhambra’s renowned Court of the Myrtles. As a central motif of the pattern, the three-point swirl is today known in Spanish as *pajarita* (little bird).

Looking at the pattern of hundreds of tiles on the wall, the structure of the design is not immediately apparent. However, its geometry turns out to be relatively simple: It is a six-fold radial symmetry. Once this is understood, it’s not that difficult to reproduce it, step by step.

Six-fold radial symmetry patterns are, with their three-fold counterparts, one of the three most commonly used families of patterns within traditional Islamic geometric art. The other pattern families are four- and eight-fold symmetries and five- and 10-fold symmetries. Although other combinations appear throughout the Islamic world across centuries, these three pattern families have been used most frequently. For anyone beginning to learn about the patterns in the traditional arts of Islamic cultures, the six-fold symmetry is a good place to start.

The pattern instructions that follow work in two phases. The first follows steps 1–12 to build a single *pajarita* motif. It starts with a central circle on a line and builds six circles of equal radius around it. This forms the motif’s foundation, a particular construction that has been referred to as a “Creation Diagram,” a name that relates the pattern to the six days that God created the world, as told in both the Qur’an and the Bible. This Creation Diagram leads to the three-tipped *pajarita* swirl. The second phase follows steps 13–18. This phase arranges, around the Creation Diagram’s ring of seven circles, rings of 12 and then 18 circles. From this a tessellated trio of *pajaritas* can be produced. Like all Islamic geometric patterns, the pattern can be extended further—as the artisans of the Alhambra *alicatado* did—by repeating the steps or, more easily, by using tracing paper to transfer key points.



## WHAT YOU WILL NEED

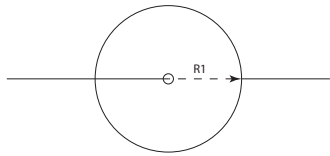
**Compass:** Choose a high-quality one that will precisely hold a radius and for which you can keep a sharp point on the pencil lead.

**Straightedge:** A metal one works best, 30-50 centimeters in length.

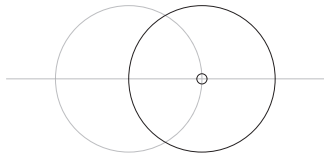
**Paper:** Use smoothly finished drawing paper, A3 or 11 x 14 inches, or any large size.

**Eraser:** Professional drafting erasers work best. Mistakes are part of learning to make patterns.

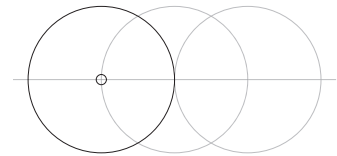
**Pencils:** Use both soft and hard leads, such as 2H and 3B; add colors as fill if you wish. Use hard leads for lines that later will be erased and soft leads for lines that will remain.



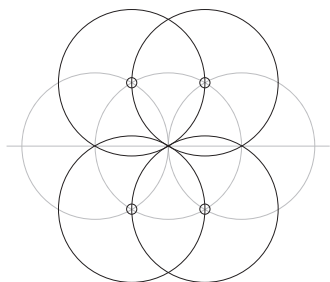
1. Start from a horizontal line. Draw a circle with Radius  $R_1$ , approximately  $1/6$  the width of page.



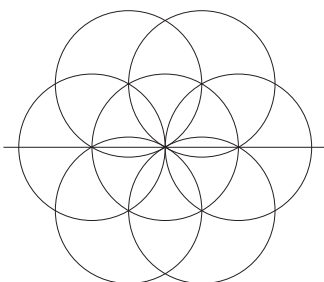
2. Draw a second circle with the same radius to the right, on the circumference of the first circle.



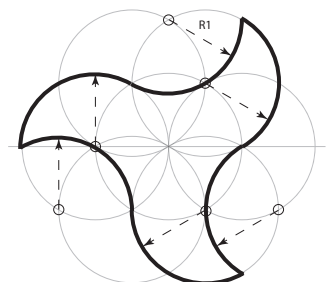
3. Draw a third circle with the same radius to the left, also on the circumference of first circle.



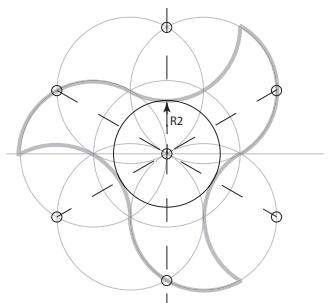
4. Add four additional circles, evenly arranged around the first circle, as shown.



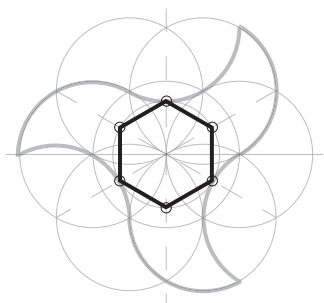
5. This is a classic Creation Diagram of six circles around one.



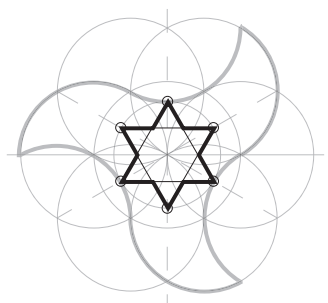
6. Again using Radius  $R_1$ , but with a bolder line, find the six points shown and use them to draw the contours of the curvilinear pajarita motif. This can be filled with a solid color, as shown in step 10.



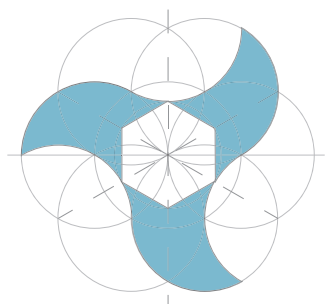
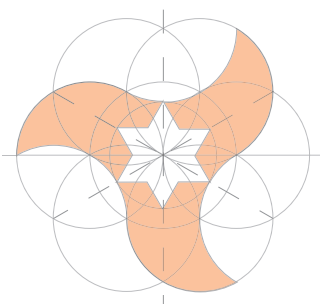
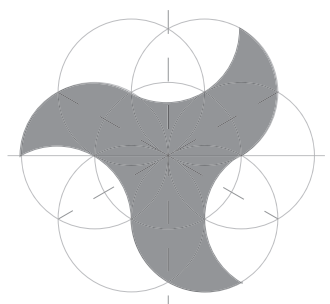
7. To produce pajaritas with inset hexagons or six-pointed stars, sketch in the three-fold radial axes and add a new proportioning circle in the center, Radius  $R_2$ .



8. Place a hexagon in the center proportioning circle from step 7.

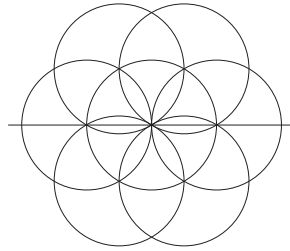


9. Alternatively or using a second pajarita (tracing paper can be used now), connect each point in the proportioning circle from step 7 with two points on either side. This forms a hexagram, or a six-pointed star. Outline its contour as shown.

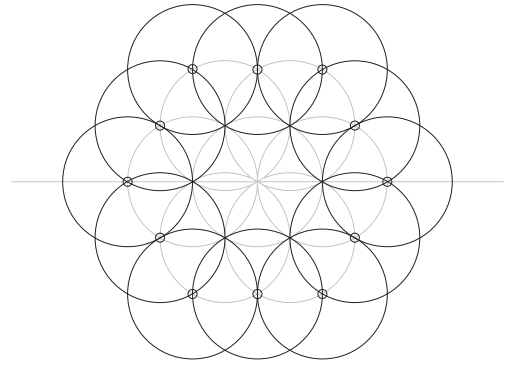


10, 11, 12: Solid, hexagon and hexagram variations of a finished pajarita motif that can be colored or cut out.

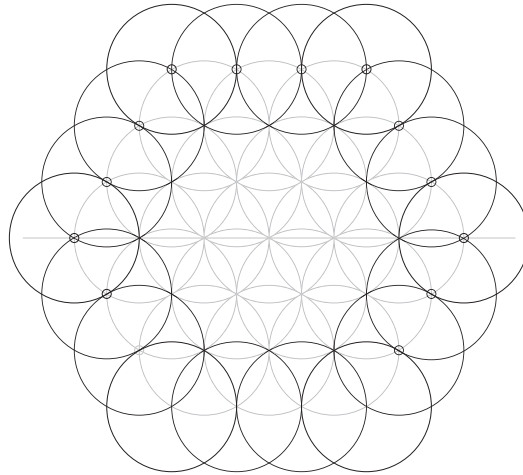
13. Build the Creation Diagram per step 5.



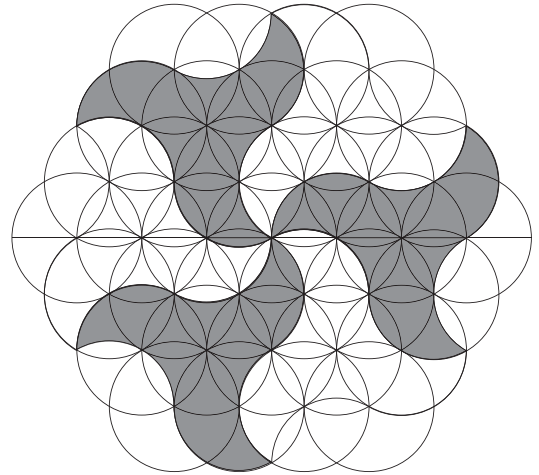
14. Add an expansion ring of circles, each Radius R1, using center points as shown.



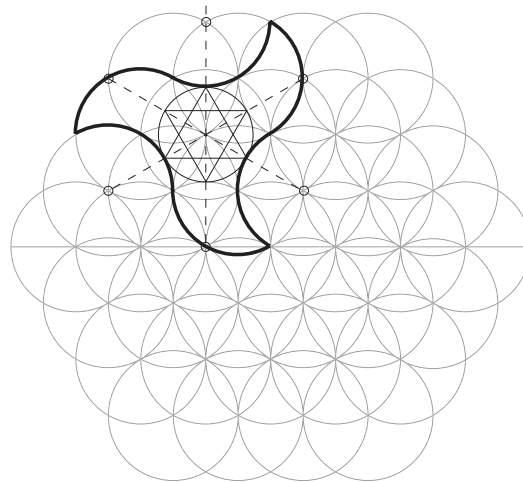
15. Add a second expansion ring using Radius R1, using center points as shown.



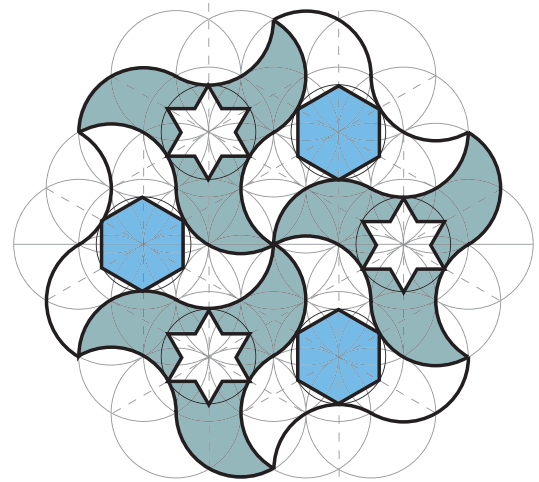
16. Refer to step 6 to outline three pajarita motifs. Note their relationship to the expanded Creation Diagram.



17. Using a central proportioning circle, Radius R2, as in step 7, add radial divisions to produce hexagrams and/or hexagons both within and between the pajaritas.



18. Finish the tessellation with optional tones. Remember that the choices of colors are up to the artist! Note how the pattern is now ready to be expanded further—indefinitely—on six sides. 🌐




Learn to make this pattern at [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com)



**Richard Henry** is an artist and teacher who focuses on the contemplative aspects of pattern. He has a background in philosophy and cognitive psychology. **Adam Williamson** is a leading specialist in biomorphic arabesque pattern as well as a skilled carver and artist. Together, Henry and Williamson direct the London-based Art of Islamic Pattern, which offers short courses, workshops and exhibitions at locations renowned for pattern-based artistic heritages in more than half a dozen countries.



 **Related articles at [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com):**  
Alhambra: Sep / Oct 1992; Jul / Aug 2014

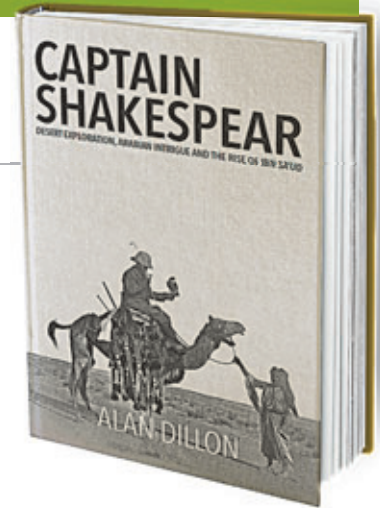


# REVIEWS

Without endorsing the views of authors, the editors encourage reading as a path to greater understanding.

**“Captain Shakespear is a familiar figure to any British diplomat or soldier who has served in Saudi Arabia ... because the Al Sa’ud themselves have never forgotten him.”**

—SIR JOHN JENKINS,  
British ambassador to Saudi Arabia, 2012-2015



## Captain Shakespear: Desert Exploration, Arabian Intrigue and the Rise of Ibn Sa’ud

Alan Dillon. Medina Publishing, 2019.

In 1914, two years before British Colonel T. E. Lawrence met with leaders of what became the Arab Revolt against Ottoman rule, Captain William Shakespear, also a British officer, was roaming the Najd of central Arabia, where he cultivated a relationship with ‘Abd al-‘Aziz ibn Sa’ud—who in 1932 became the founding king of Saudi Arabia. Although little-known in the West, Shakespear remains a legend in Saudi Arabia for his prescient support of Ibn Sa’ud. Dillon first learned of his subject while working in the British Embassy in Riyadh, and this biography conveys the talent, flair and diplomatic finesse that made Shakespear’s career possible. Although Shakespear’s entreaty to back Ibn Sa’ud was initially ignored by the British, on the eve of World War I, Ibn Sa’ud’s bond with Shakespear made the diplomat an asset as Britain sought to counter Ottoman influence in the Najd. Drawing on records unavailable to Shakespear’s sole previous biographer, Dillon’s vivid tale offers the fullest portrait of the man yet.

—DIANNA WRAY



### Endings

‘Abd al-Rahman Munif. Trans. Roger Allen. Interlink Books, 2020.

A revised English translation of famed Saudi writer ‘Abd al-Rahman Munif’s original 1977 work in Arabic, this masterful novel is set in al-Tiba, an ambiguous village on the edge of modernity but mired in nostalgia. The desert quickly emerges as the story’s cruel villain, withholding rain even as village elders are taunted by memories of prior abundance. Leaders from the nearest city have promised a dam that will provide electricity, irrigation and insurance against nature’s vicissitudes, but the project remains unrealized. As drought brings simmering tensions to the surface, an unlikely hero steps up: ‘Assaf, the village’s ridiculed eccentric, pricks the people’s conscience with his connection to the land, conservation ethic and skill in hunting, a pastime of newfound importance. A moment of catharsis forces al-Tiba’s people to reckon with their blithe lack of preparation, and an outpouring of stories from their collective past galvanizes them toward a shared future.

—J. TREVOR WILLIAMS



### My Nakba

Samir Toubassy. Olive Branch Press, 2019.

Centering around al-Nakba (the Disaster), as Palestinians call their 1948 displacement from their homeland, Toubassy’s engaging memoir explains how al-Nakba impacted his life. Filled with nostalgia for the Jaffa neighborhood of his childhood, *My Nakba* serves as a love letter to Middle Eastern culture, testifying to the strong bonds between family and the strength of connection forged by tragedy. The novel follows Toubassy’s life and his successful careers in nonprofit work and global business, intimately detailing his journey from Lebanon to Saudi Arabia, the UK and finally the US. Toubassy seeks faith and meaning after leaving his homeland. Heartfelt details and sincere love for family, friends and country fill the memoir and give glimpses into the life of a refugee trying to make sense of a world marked by suffering. Recommended for anyone interested in learning more about Palestinian history from individual experiences.

—HANNAH STERENBERG



### The American Granddaughter

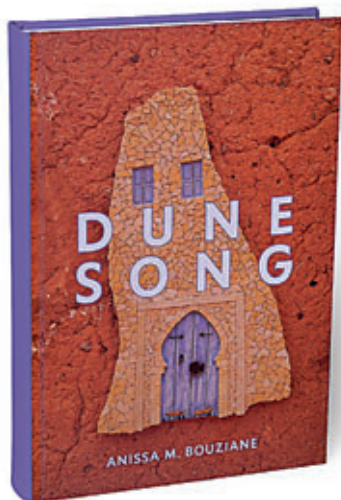
Inaam Kachachi. Trans. Nariman Youssef. Interlink Books, 2021.

This edition updates an earlier English translation of the 2008 Arabic novel, which follows protagonist Zeina’s return to Iraq to serve as an interpreter for the US Army. Zeina, whose parents fled Ba’athist repression when she was a child, harbors two identities: the American one, but-tressed by post-9/11 patriotism, and the Iraqi one, frozen in the enchanted childhood of her memory. With these at odds, Zeina enters the war zone soon after the 2003 invasion, lodging at Saddam Hussein’s vacated Tikrit palace and eventually visiting Mosul, where “everyone speaks with my grandmother’s accent.” A Baghdad reunion with grandmother Rahma, the family’s proud keeper of memory, crystallizes the internal struggle Zeina faces in aiding the occupiers of her ancestral homeland. The book poetically explores the stinging sorrow of grasping at the past, the link between language and identity, and the tragic loss of never being able to truly go home again.

—J. TREVOR WILLIAMS



# AUTHOR'S CORNER



## Giving Voice to a Multicultural Character: A Conversation With Anissa Bouziane

by MARINA ALI

Writer Anissa M. Bouziane's heritage in Morocco reflects in her creative output, from her experiences in film to her 2019 novel, *Dune Song*. We spoke to discuss her influences and her take on "linguistic polyphony," a literary technique that combines the norms, styles and histories of multiple languages to enrich narrative. Bouziane was born in the US state of Tennessee, but she moved to Morocco while still an infant. Her family left again to the US, but soon thereafter again returned to Morocco, where Bouziane completed her primary education. She eventually returned to the US to attend Wellesley College, where she studied political science with a minor in anthropology; she went on to earn a master's degree in fine arts from Columbia University as well as a certificate in film from NYU. Now a teacher by trade, she regards herself as a "lifelong learner," and she is currently working on her doctorate in creative writing and literary practice at the University of Warwick in the UK.



Anissa M. Bouziane

***Dune Song* is so relatable to me as a Muslim American who grew up in post-9/11 US. What was the inspiration behind your story?**

I gave Jeehan my truth. Are certain things transformed? Yes. But generally, most of what Jeehan experiences in America are things I experienced. I witnessed the collapse of the Twin Towers. I chose not to write a journalistic account of it in *Dune Song*. I chose to write about the ripple layers of trauma. Those of us in the Muslim American community were impacted by that event. It's important that we engage in a dialog about the broad-ranging nature of that trauma, even if communities were impacted in different ways and to different degrees. The tragedy of 9/11 opened what many wanted to see as a chasm between East and West, and the notion that suddenly there was no bridge between these worlds. Yet, individuals like me live in that chasm. Let us recognize this space. It is maybe

the place where we can begin to build a better world.

***Dune Song* frequently touches on healing. How does that relate to the ideas of forgiveness and personal growth in the novel?**

One of the things that was the most intense for me to write was the passage of Jeehan buried up to her neck inside the dune. She lets go of all that she has been carrying. Here is a girl who saw death on a scale she thought she would not see. Her whole notion of where she belongs collapses, and she doesn't know how to hold it all together. Of course, there's this symbol of her dragging a yellow Samsonite suitcase back and forth in each of her trips across the Atlantic. She feels like it's exploding with the weight of her dreams, her expectations and her family's expectations. Ultimately, *Dune Song* is about how we keep going in the face of fear.

**I loved the settings in two continents. What was your thinking about that?**

A lot of the meaning is in the way the different pieces speak to one another. When I spoke earlier about a cartography between East and West, the structure of *Dune Song* takes readers back and forth. Jeehan might seem like a different person, but she is the same person. She echoes my truth in Morocco and my truth in America. I can be a person who sounds very New York and very Moroccan at the same time. For those of us who are multicultural, we inhabit these different selves. They aren't mutually exclusive or contradictory. They're layers upon layers of who we are.

**What is your advice to aspiring writers?**

I think it's important to trust your own voice. Even if your voice is unconventional and it doesn't resemble any other voice out there, I think you must fight for it rather than shape your voice to fit the expectations.

### *Dune Song*

Anissa M. Bouziane.  
Interlink Books, 2019.

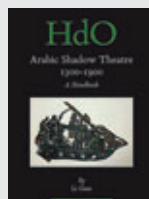


Find these and more reviews at [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com)



### Arabian Romantic: Poems on Bedouin Life and Love

'Abdallāh ibn Sbayyil.  
Trans. Marcel Kurpershoek. NYU Press, 2020.



### Arabic Shadow Theatre 1300-1900: A Handbook

Li Guo. Brill Publishing, 2020.



### Printed in Beirut

Jabbour Douaihy.  
Trans. Paula Haydar. Interlink, 2018.



# EVENTS

Highlights from  
aramcoworld.com

Please verify a venue's  
schedule before visiting.

## CURRENT / JANUARY

**From the Depths of Arabia: A South Arabian Stele from the Al Thani Collection** depicts, as its centerpiece, a finely carved and polished relief of a woman clutching a sheaf of wheat. Produced around the first centuries BCE and CE, it offers a window into the layered civilizations and regional influences in the southern Arabian Peninsula, which date back to the late second millennium BCE and that prospered on trade in frankincense, myrrh and more. The State Hermitage Museum, **Saint Petersburg**, through January 15.

## CURRENT / FEBRUARY

**It's Egypt! Interactive Gallery Exhibition** is a hands-on exhibition that explores the experiences and consequences of cycles in the daily lives of Egyptians during the times of pharaonic kingdoms. Cycles were most apparent in the annual flood of the Nile, the phases of the moon and stars; they were also experienced in the way life itself was understood as a cycle from birth to death to rebirth. **Virginia** Museum of Fine Arts, **Richmond**, through February 1.

**Temporary Museum. For Palestine: Hazem Harb** immerses visitors within historical black-and-white photographs of the Holy Land as backdrops to step into. Other works by the Palestinian contemporary artist stand in dialog

with a new largescale installation made from olive-oil containers, shining light on Palestine's natural resources. This exhibition reveals Harb's deep reflection on his roots, entrenched between the past, present and the future. Tabari Artspace, **Dubai**, through February 10.

**Assyria to America** examines the ancient and modern histories of six stone reliefs from Nimrud, now in Iraq, that are in the collections of Bowdoin College—now brought together for the first time in 150 years. Together with other artifacts—ivory furniture inlays, cuneiform tablets, cylinder seals and more—this exhibit explores the sensory experiences and vibrant court life of the Neo-Assyrian empire. Bowdoin College Museum of Art, **Brunswick, Maine**, through February 27.

**Hidden Stories: Books Along the Silk Roads** has visitors engage with books, scrolls, manuscript paintings and textiles that shaped—not just documented—life along one of history's most-important trade networks and beyond. Artifacts on display inspire imagination, transporting visitors to far-away lands and times. A digital companion exhibition is available online as well. Aga Khan Museum, **Toronto**, through February 27.

## CURRENT / MARCH

**The Silk Road: A Living History** is a visual travelog of adventurer Christopher Wilton-Steer's 2019 expedition along the Silk Road. The UK-based writer and photographer traversed 40,000 kilometers, from Venice to Beijing, over four months, documenting architecture, natural beauty, history and people along the way. Aga Khan Museum, **Toronto**, through March.

## CURRENT / JULY

**Queen Nefertari's Egypt** features 230 objects from the artisan village of Deir-el-Medina, home to those who created the royal tombs, including that of Queen Nefertari. This exhibition showcases the legacy of royal wives, sisters, daughters and mothers of pharaohs, as well as the female artists who contributed to the creation of these stunning objects. **New Orleans** Museum of Art, through July 17.

**Life in a Cup: Coffee Culture in the Islamic World** explores the traditions that make coffee a way of life in parts of the Islamic world. Coffeehouses emerged as meeting places where people of different social positions, ethnicities and religions could meet on an equal footing around a cup of coffee. Fondness for coffee prevailed and became the essence of hospitality, governed by strict etiquette. The British Museum, **London**, through September 18.

## COMING / FEBRUARY

**Taking Shape: Abstraction from the Arab World, 1950s–1980s** traces the emergence and development of abstraction in the Arab world through 60 paintings and sculptures by a group of artists from across the Arab world. Johnson Museum of Art, **Ithaca, New York**, February 12 through June 12.

Readers are welcome to submit event information for possible inclusion to [proposals@aramcoamericas.com](mailto:proposals@aramcoamericas.com), subject line "Events."



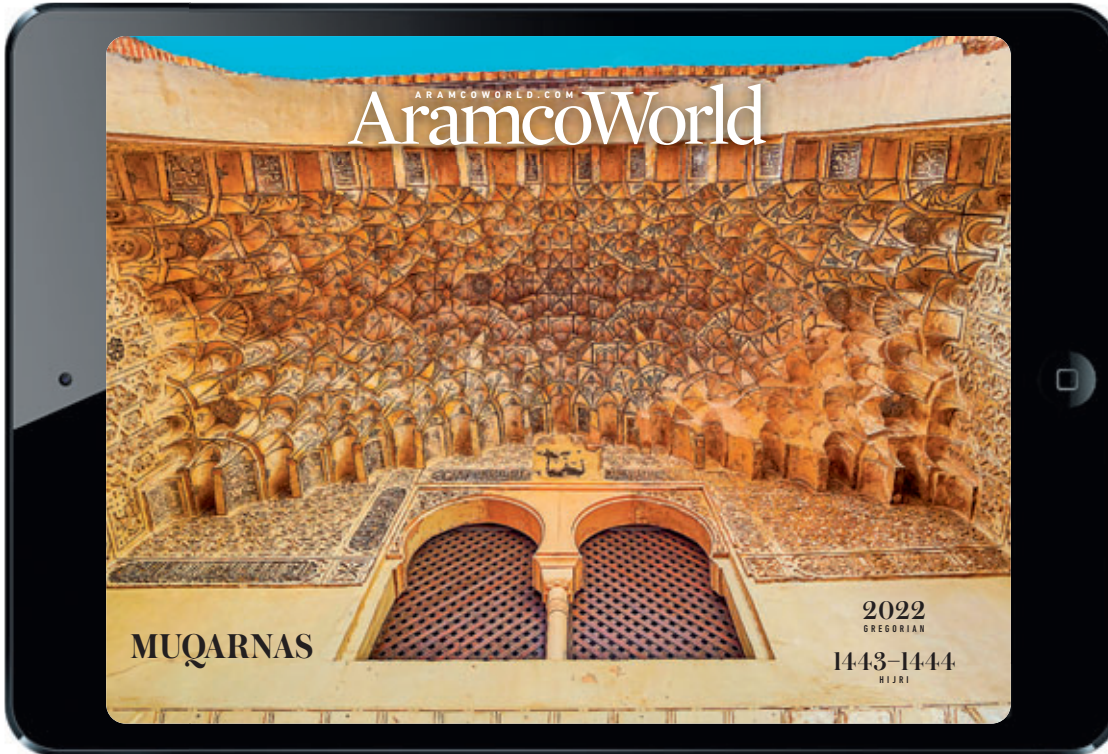
### Mohamed Abla: Solo Exhibition: Earthly Treasures

channels Abla's unique optimism, capturing imaginations and uniting generations through the artist's mesmeric world. This body of work comprises a selection of seminal multimedia collages, of varying scale, that orbit around the spirit and curative properties of plant life, particularly the cactus, a source of healing energy and a mythical entity, which Abla dislodges from its geographic fixtures and unleashes into new, otherworldly realms. Tabari Artspace, **Dubai**, through January 31.

*Earthly Treasures, Series 9*, by Mohamed Abla, collage and mixed media on canvas, 140 x 160 centimeters.



# 2022 CALENDAR



The 2022 *AramcoWorld* calendar is also online at [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com).



Follow us on Facebook, Instagram.



Download our free mobile app.

*AramcoWorld* is a bimonthly publication available in print, web and mobile editions, and an email newsletter is published biweekly. Two-year (12-issue) renewable subscriptions to the print edition are available without charge to a limited number of readers worldwide.

**To subscribe to the email newsletter:** [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com) → Subscribe → Newsletter.

**To subscribe to the print edition:** [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com) → Subscribe → Print Edition.

For **residents of Saudi Arabia**, all requests for subscriptions, changes of address and renewals must be sent by postal mail to Public Relations, Saudi Aramco, Box 5000, Dhahran 31311, Saudi Arabia.

**Change of address:** [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com) → Subscribe → Print Edition. Have your mailing label with you in order to enter your alphanumeric Subscriber Account Number.

**Back issues**, from 1960 onward, can be read in full online and downloaded from [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com).

**Article Proposals:** [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com) → About → Guidelines for Contributors.

**Permissions:**

**Texts** of articles may be reprinted without specific permission provided that the text be neither edited nor abridged, that the magazine and author be credited, and that a copy of the reprinted article or a link to it be provided to the editors.

**Photographs and illustrations:** Much of our photo archive is available on our website. Image licensing for approved uses is royalty free.

**No spam:** Contact us with confidence. You will receive no unsolicited marketing email or postal mail as a result of your subscription or inquiry.

**Privacy:** [aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com) → Privacy Policy

*AramcoWorld* (ISSN 1530-5821) is published bimonthly by Aramco Americas, Two Allen Center, 1200 Smith Street, Houston TX 77002, USA.

Copyright © 2022 by Aramco Americas. Volume 73, Number 1. Periodicals postage paid at Houston, Texas, and at additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *AramcoWorld*, Box 2106, Houston, Texas 77252-2106.

# AramcoWorld



[aramcoworld.com](http://aramcoworld.com)