

International Congress of Islamic Arts and Crafts

Esfahan, Islamic Republic of Iran 4 - 9 October, 2002

The Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture (IRCICA) and the Ministry of Culture and Islamic Guidance, Islamic Republic of Iran, are jointly organizing an International Congress on Islamic Arts and Crafts, to take place in Esfahan between 4 and 9 October, 2002. The event will include the participation of:

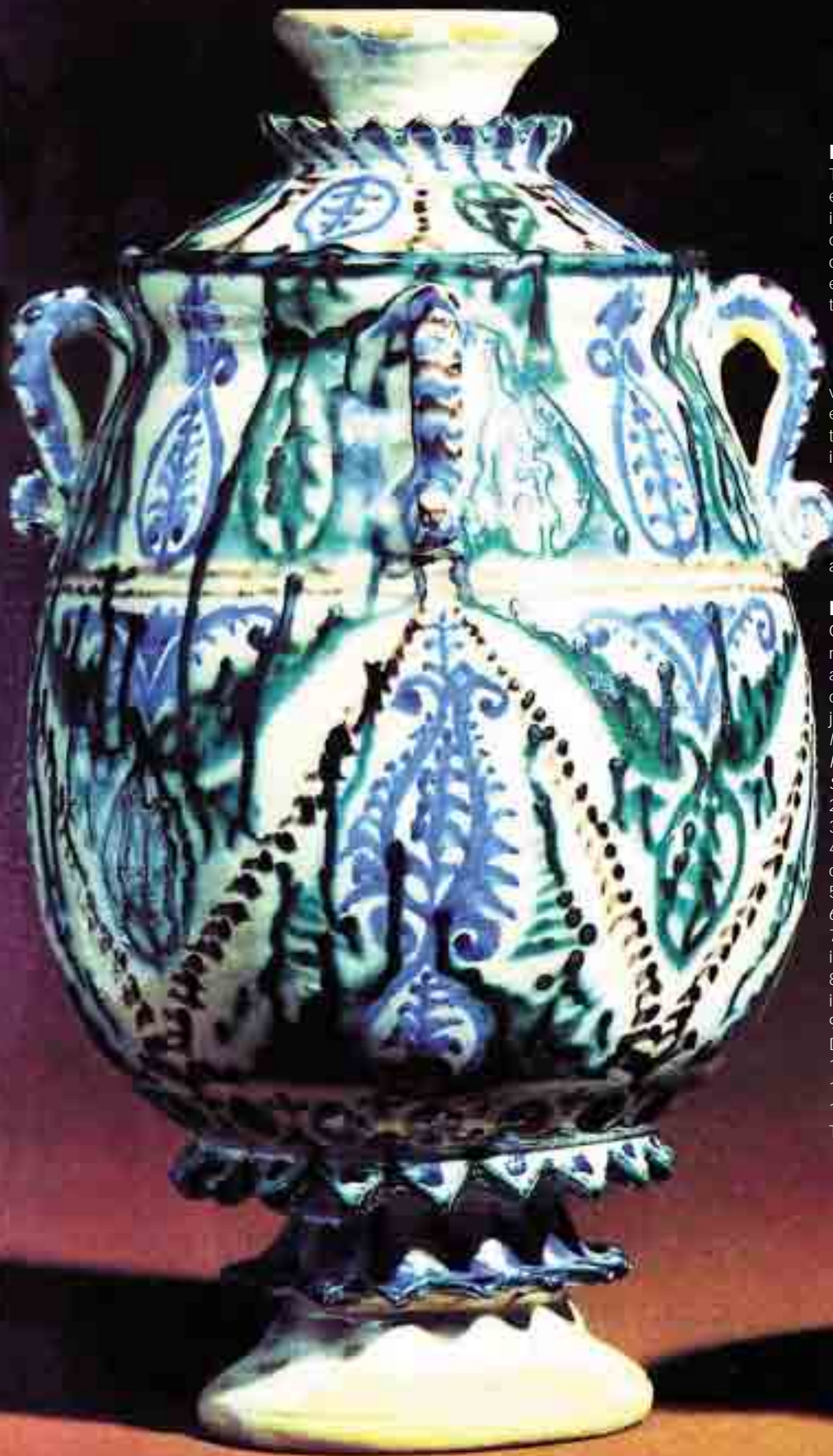
- OIC Member States
- International organizations and institutions working in the field of Islamic arts and crafts
- Universities, academicians, scholars of art history, policymakers, planners, arts administrators, artisans, and specialists dealing with the arts
- Artisans who will display their own works

The congress will project Islamic culture by highlighting the beauty and value of Islamic arts and crafts. It will also suggest ways and means to create favourable conditions for artists and craftspeople, which will be critical in encouraging artisans to continue their skills and transfer them to the next generations. The congress is therefore seen as essential both for the preservation and continuity of the cultural heritage of the Islamic World.

It is expected that the congress will discuss important issues relating to design, method, technical cooperation and the development of skills, exchange of techniques, improvement of the quality of production, the education and training of skilled artisans, financing, marketing and obstacles encountered, patronage and national policies. The major objective of the congress is to promote and assist the creation of an awareness of Islamic arts and crafts in the world today.

It is hoped that the event will provide interesting new approaches and possible solutions to some of the major problems facing the future of Islamic arts and crafts development. The event will also be a good opportunity for assessing and determining the prospects of economic, social and cultural development of Islamic arts and crafts in various regions. >





Project Approach

The method proposed aims to bring together scholars of the history of art, experts and institutions concerned with Islamic arts and crafts. The congress would provide an opportunity to pool knowledge and experiences together, allowing experts to survey the existing situation and assess the methods adopted within different countries for the identification of pertinent issues, problems and prospects. Apart from being a valuable forum for the sharing of experiences between organizations and countries, the congress will also address specific issues for future development in a wide variety of fields.

The congress hopes to explore major issues that will determine future directions concerning creativity in Islamic arts and crafts.

Panels

Over the course of five days, panels of eminent scholars and specialists in Islamic arts and crafts will present their findings. The congress will discuss the following 24 subject areas related to Islamic arts and crafts:
Main Topic 1. Islamic Arts and Crafts: Past, Present and Future
Sub-Topics

2. Philosophical Interpretation of Islamic Arts
3. The Role of Arts in Inter-Cultural Dialogue
4. Islamic Architecture: Revival and Re-use of Traditional Patterns
5. Arts in the Bazaars
6. Illustrations in Islamic Traditional Textiles
7. Modern Modes of Education and Training in Embroidery
8. Modern Modes of Education and Training in National Costumes
9. Art of Calligraphy and its Future Development
10. Rare Manuscripts
11. Creativity in Miniature Painting
12. The Art of Marbling and Paper Making: Today and Tomorrow ➤

إناء فخاري قديم
 Ancient Pottery

13. Gilding and Binding in the Muslim World
14. Developments in the Art of Wooden Works
15. Tiles and Ceramics: Developments in History and New Applications
16. Creative Islamic Ornaments on Metal Craftworks.
17. Carpets and Kilims and their Role in the Cultural and Economic Life of Member States
18. The Influence of Islamic Arts and Crafts on European Art
19. Islamic Arts and Modern Technology: Any Limits?
20. Introduction of Islamic Arts and Crafts within and outside the Islamic World
21. Technical Cooperation for Developing Skills and Exchange of Applied Techniques
22. Role of Government and Private Agencies for Exploring Opportunities of Growth and Preservation of Traditional Arts and Crafts
23. Changing Perspectives in Islamic Arts and New Realities: Economic and Financial Factors
24. Marketing Difficulties in Islamic Arts and Crafts

Brief presentations by member countries and specialists will follow the presentation of papers, which in turn will be followed by a general discussion.



الزخارف الخشبية الملونة - المغرب
Wooden craftsmanship - Morocco



النقش على النحاس
Engraving Copper

Special Programme

The congress will include, besides other things:

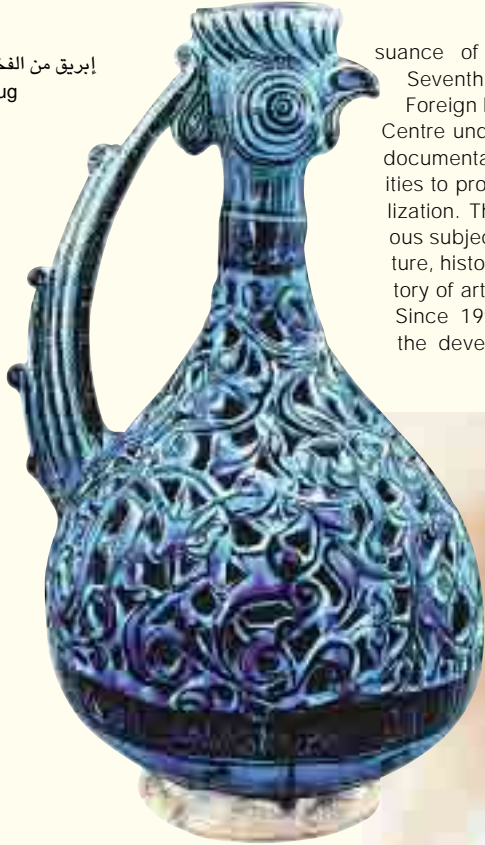
- An "international walk" of the participants, including the artisans, under the slogan: *Revival and Preservation of the Islamic Cultural Heritage*. This will take place on Friday 4 October, 2002, at the Emam Naghsh-e-Jahan Square in Esfahan.

The main aim of this walk will be to create international awareness of the importance of Islamic cultural heritage, as well as highlighting the dangers that affect its existence and which also necessitates international collaboration to safeguard important monuments in the world.

- The exhibition of a set of masterpieces of Islamic arts and crafts. This will display masterpieces in the field of Islamic arts and crafts, presenting different types, designs and styles that are applied in various regions of OIC countries.

- Artists and skilled craftspeople will display their skills and products through country arts and crafts pavilions – a craft bazaar will provide interaction between commerce and production. Master artisans from the member ➤

إبريق من الفخار المزجج
Glazed Jug



suance of Resolution 3/7-ECS of the Seventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers (Istanbul, 1976). The Centre undertakes research, publishing, documentation and other scholarly activities to promote Islamic culture and civilization. The Centre's work covers various subject areas in Islamic history, culture, history of science, the arts, the history of arts, and cultural heritage. Since 1990, IRCICA has emphasized the development of crafts within OIC

Member States. With this aim, the centre undertook a comprehensive programme to encourage the revival, preservation and development of Islamic arts and crafts. The programme is enhanced with collaboration from ministries and other authorities within OIC Member States as well as regional and international organizations. Craft-making is a sector that is still developing, and if well employed, it could help in solving the Members States' economic hardships, fight unemployment, and ➤

states of the Organization of Islamic Conference will show off their talents, techniques and qualities in specially designed exhibition pavilions.

- The programme will include site visits to see artisans at work in Esfahan. Master artisans will display their skills, techniques, designs and products.

- There will be an exhibition of cultural publications and relevant materials, including display stalls, audio and video cassettes, and multimedia publications and books on Islamic arts and crafts.

Crafts Development Programme

The Research Centre for Islamic History, Art and Culture was established in 1980 as the first subsidiary organ of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference (OIC) working in the field of culture, in pur-



لوحة زيتية من الفن الإيراني
Persian Painting



النقش على القماش - ماليزيا
Handmade Patterned Cloth

speed the cultural and tourism-related wheels of such economies.

IRCICA aims to focus on specific areas in which crafts face certain obstacles and difficulties preventing their development. Such obstacles are due mainly to the increasing use of machinery, the widespread mass production of machine-made products, the hard living conditions which push the artisan to leave his / her traditional occupation to work in factories, a lack of funding, insufficient education and training opportunities, difficulties encountered in marketing, and other exigencies.

The sector acquires even greater significance when one considers its potential to bring in satisfactory investment returns and other economic benefits. It offers job opportunities to a considerable percentage of manpower without requiring large capital investments; it encourages tourism, increases the national income and the inflow of foreign currency; it provides opportunities for establishing crafts villages that can generate greater economic activity on the part of the unemployed portion of a particular labour force,



سجادة ذات نقوش رائعة
Rug with intricate Ornamentation

especially women; it also offers marketing channels for new and distinct products which distinguish national and local cultures from each other, thus adding to the richness of global culture as a whole.

The main target of the Centre is to deal with specific craft topics and evaluate their present state and future prospects in order to develop their economic, social and educational aspects.

Achieving such a task would require extensive research and study on design, development of skills, quality craft production, financing, marketing opportunities, and national policies pertaining to consumers through the organization of seminars. Policies and programmes to control the endangering of these crafts need also to be addressed.

Regional comparative overviews of the state of craft development are expected to be part of these seminars. The collection of data and information, issues, problems and prospects highlighted would provide the baseline data to develop programmes of action for the promotion of traditional crafts. ■