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10 OCT 2019 - 26 JAN 2020

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Exhibition: "Inspired by the East"



Between 10 October 2019 and 26 January 2020, the

British Museum in London, UK, presents an exhibition entitled *Inspired by the East: How the Islamic world influenced Western art*. The exhibition results from a collaboration between the [British Museum](#) and the [Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia](#), in Kuala Lumpur, both ASEMUS members. It will later be presented [in Kuala Lumpur between June and October 2020](#).

Charting the fascinating history of cultural and artistic interactions between East and West, *Inspired by the East* explores the impact the Islamic world has had on Western art for centuries.

Artistic exchange between East and West has a long and intertwined history, and **the exhibition picks these stories up from the 15th century, following cultural interactions that can still be felt today**. Objects from Europe, North America, the Middle East and North Africa highlight a centuries-old tradition of influence and exchange from East to West. The diverse selection of objects includes **ceramics, photography, glass, jewellery and clothing, as well as contemporary art**, showcasing how artistic exchange influenced a variety of visual and decorative arts. The exhibition concludes with a **21st-century perspective, through the eyes of four female artists from the Middle East and North Africa** who continue to question and subvert the idea of Orientalism in their work and explore the subject of Muslim female identity. The show takes a **deeper look at the art movement of 'Orientalism'** – specifically the way in which North Africa and the Middle East were represented as lands of beauty and intrigue, especially in European and North American art. Often blurring the lines between fantasy and reality, Orientalist art reached its heyday in the mid-1800s, as Europeans and North Americans were looking overseas to fundamentally learn more about other cultures, but its popularity had faded by the 1940s with the decline of the British Empire. *Inspired by the East: how the Islamic world influenced Western art* includes generous loans from the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia's extensive collection of Islamic and Orientalist art. The exhibition and collaboration highlight centuries of cultural exchange between East and West and its continuing importance today.

Further information

For additional information about *Inspired by the East: How the Islamic world influenced Western art*, please visit:

- **Information about the exhibition on the British Museum's website:**
https://www.britishmuseum.org/whats_on/exhibitions/east.aspx
- **Background to the collaboration between the two partner museums, on the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia's website:** <https://www.iamm.org.my/inspired-by-the-east/>

Museum Malaysia's website: <https://www.museum.gov.my/rep/2019/07/16/british-museum-explore-islamic-world-impact-western-art>

- "British Museum to explore Islamic world's impact on western art", by Mark Brown in *The Guardian*, July 2019: <https://www.theguardian.com/culture/2019/jul/16/british-museum-explore-islamic-world-impact-western-art>

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