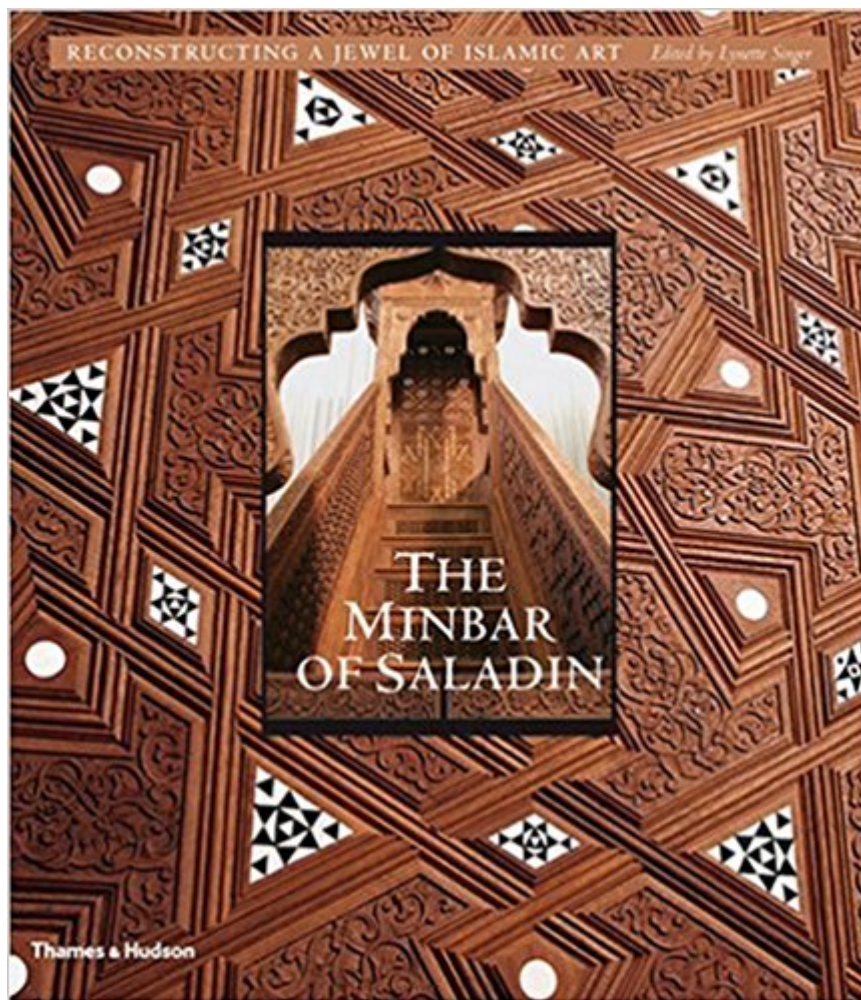




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# The Minbar Of Saladin: Reconstructing A Jewel Of Islamic Art



## Synopsis

The story of how this magnificent Islamic treasure was painstakingly reconstructed under the aegis of the Jordanian royal family. Early one morning in August 1969 a firebomb was set off in the al-Aqsa mosque in the heart of one of the holiest places in Jerusalem. A devastating blaze soon engulfed the thousand-year-old building, severely damaging the interior. When the firemen had put out the flames, a sodden pile of ashes was discovered, all that remained of one of the jewels of Islamic art—the Minbar of Saladin. An extraordinary piece of craftsmanship, the Minbar, or pulpit, had been installed by Saladin in the mosque on his triumphant recapture of Jerusalem from the Crusaders in 1187. Made of 16,000 pieces of intricately carved wood, adorned with ivory and ebony, it was widely acknowledged as a pinnacle of Islamic design and woodcarving. This book on the Minbar's reconstruction tells of the quest to fathom the principles of Islamic sacred geometry and to decipher how the Minbar's complex patterns were created. This was followed by a worldwide search for materials and for craftsmen who still possessed the necessary skills—skills that had seemed lost in today's world of mass production and modern technology. The book also illustrates the work of the Prince of Wales's School of Traditional Arts in London and the College of Traditional Islamic Arts & Architecture in al-Salt, Jordan, where many of the crafts for which Islamic art and architecture are celebrated are being revived. Published to accompany the documentary film *Stairway to Heaven*, narrated by Kenneth Branagh. Forewords by HRH The Prince of Wales and HRH Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad of Jordan. 200 illustrations, 170 in color.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Lynette Singer is Managing Director of West Park Pictures.

I have been collecting for years books related to Islamic art and mathematics in Islamic ornaments. Some of these books are good, relatively good, and some other not good at all. One day walking on the streets of Istanbul I found a bookshop with many books on Islamic topics: art, history, and culture. Here I found "The Minbar of Saladin: Reconstructing a Jewel of Islamic Art". I started reading fragments, analyzing the pictures and I realized that I found a jewel - the book that I was dreaming of for years. I wanted to buy this book immediately, but the price was so high that I decided to check . Here I got it for roughly 1/3 of the asked price. When I got the parcel from I have spent two days of a weekend reading this book. It was incredible pleasure - very well written story of reconstruction of the minbar of Saladin, a lot of history of the Middle East written in such a way that a complete ignorant can understand what was happening when Jerusalem in those times, wonderful mathematical analysis of Islamic ornaments, and a lot of good images of Islamic ornaments (both drawings and photographs). And behind of all this there are peoples with passion and great understanding what is Islamic art and mathematics behind of it. After reading this book I realized that I made a serious mistake. I bought the book but I was completely blind not seeing that there is also a movie with the same title. I checked YouTube and I found fragments of the movie. It is even more exciting to watch the movie and see faces of the peoples who were involved in reconstruction of the minbar of Saladin. Now I am waiting for another parcel from , this time with the movie. I guess I will have another weekend of joy watching the movie and reading again fragments of the book. In my opinion this book is one of the three best books on mathematics and Islamic ornaments I have ever seen. The two other books are "Islamic Art and Architecture ..." by Issam El-Said, and "Islamic Patterns ..." by Keith Critchlow.

beautiful book. fascinating subject.

This is a very nicely produced book with a good deal of interesting information. Still, I was disappointed by the book. I expected discussion of the details of the intricate construction - based on the title. There is no detail on construction and only two small photographs of the panels in the shop. The YouTube video is more informative. Details of the generic layout of the patterns is included, but is covered better elsewhere. Details of realizing the complex designs in wood are not covered in any depth.

the book delivered and brought the smile to my face that i was looking for. the amazing photography, the detailed history and a means to provide my children with awareness of influential leaders - exactly what i was looking for! absolutely love it!

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