



**Universiteit  
Leiden**  
The Netherlands

**ArchNet Islamic Architecture on the Web**  
Allibhai, S.

**Citation**

Allibhai, S. (2002). ArchNet Islamic Architecture on the Web. *Isim Newsletter*, 9(1), 39-39.  
Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/17544>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)  
License: [Leiden University Non-exclusive license](#)  
Downloaded from: <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/17544>

**Note:** To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).

Internet

SHIRAZ ALLIBHAI

The Aga Khan Trust for Culture was founded in 1988 and is registered in Geneva, Switzerland, as a private, non-denominational, philanthropic foundation. It is an integral part of the Aga Khan Development Network, a family of institutions created by His Highness the Aga Khan, with distinct yet complementary mandates to improve the welfare and prospects of people in countries in the developing world, particularly in Asia and Africa.

One of the aims of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture is to increase cross-cultural understanding of Islamic architecture and the intimate connection between architecture and culture in Islamic civilizations. It also aims to create greater awareness and appreciation of the diversity and pluralism of Muslim cultures – within the Muslim world itself as well as in the West. Architecture creates a space which is less politically charged and where common concerns and values can enter into an exchange amongst peoples of different cultures. This exchange and understanding have never been more important than they are now.

►  
Abd al-Aziz Khan  
Madrasa,  
Bukhara,  
Uzbekistan

ArchNet ([www.archnet.org](http://www.archnet.org)) is an exciting new project currently being developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), School of Architecture and Planning, with the support of the Aga Khan Trust for Culture. The central goal of ArchNet is to provide extensive, high-quality, globally accessible intellectual resources focused on topics of architecture, urban design, urban development, including restoration, conservation, housing, landscape, and concerns related to the Islamic world. It provides, on an accessible server: images, a searchable text library, bibliograph-

# ArchNet

## Islamic Architecture on the Web

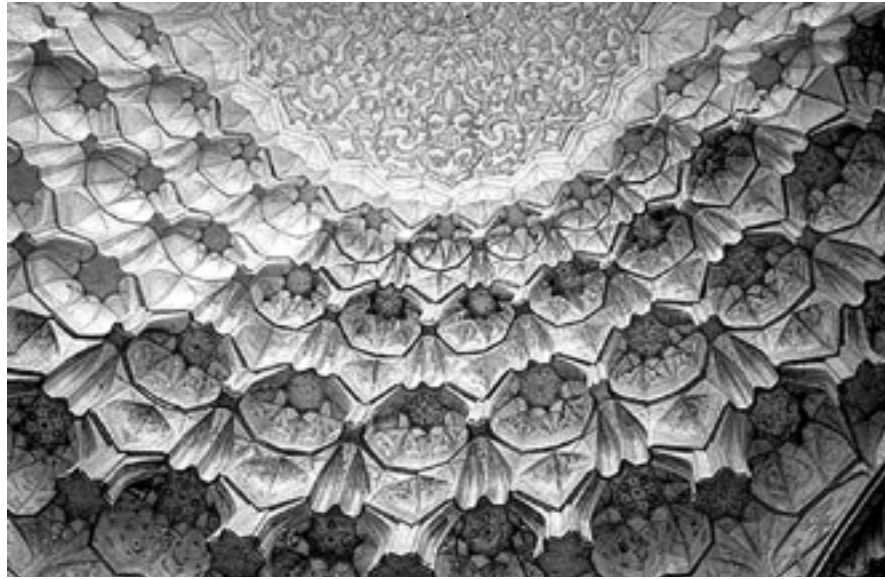


PHOTO: ROYA MAREFAT, 1987; © AGA KHAN VISUAL ARCHIVES, MIT

ical reference databases, on-line lectures, curricular materials, papers, essays, and reviews, discussion forums and statistical information. The structure is designed to offer each user a personal workspace tailored to his or her individual needs. From this space, users are able to contribute their own findings and research to the larger site. The website aims to foster close ties between institutions and between users. Through the use of on-line forums, chat

rooms, and debates, it is hoped that the site will encourage and promote discussions amongst participants. The system is designed to promote ready inter-communication and maintenance of an international scholarly community among scholars, practitioners, and interested non-specialists in the field. Furthermore, it is structured to facilitate effective division of scholarly labour and sharing of resources, rather than the traditional pattern

of duplicating library holdings, slide collections, and so on at multiple locations.

Currently there are over 8000 images and 1500 publications related to both the contemporary and historical architecture of the Islamic world in the Digital Library. This number will continue to grow as collections from MIT, Harvard University and the Aga Khan Trust for Culture are added. In addition, there is an Institutional Workspace which allows schools of architecture and planning from around the world to share their expertise, knowledge, research, student work, and regional concerns.

ArchNet is envisaged as a borderless network of institutions contributing to, and learning from each other. It is hoped that this will have considerable influence on the way that architects and planners are educated and practise. New computer and telecommunication technologies have great potential for supporting communication and collaboration among architecture and planning students, faculty, scholars, and practitioners throughout the world. ArchNet will provide opportunities for realizing that potential.

For more information, please consult the ArchNet:  
[www.archnet.org](http://www.archnet.org)