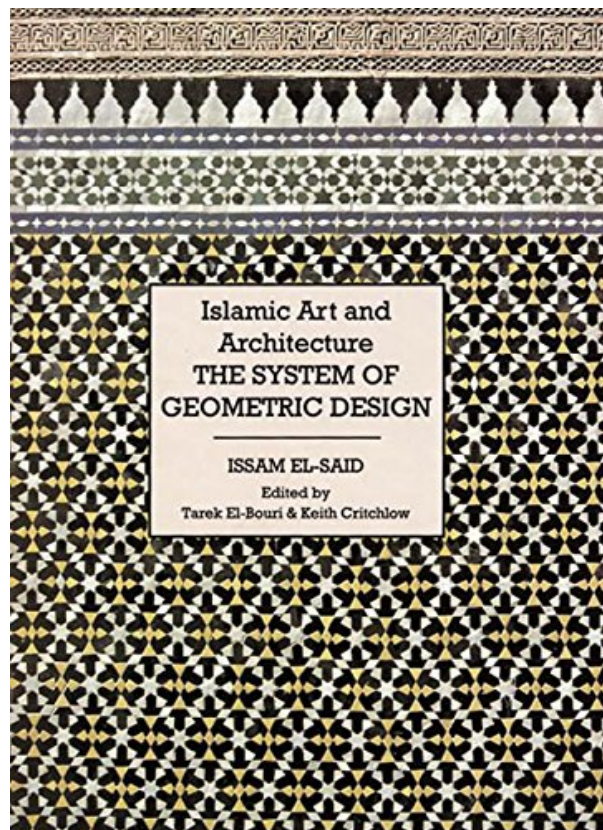
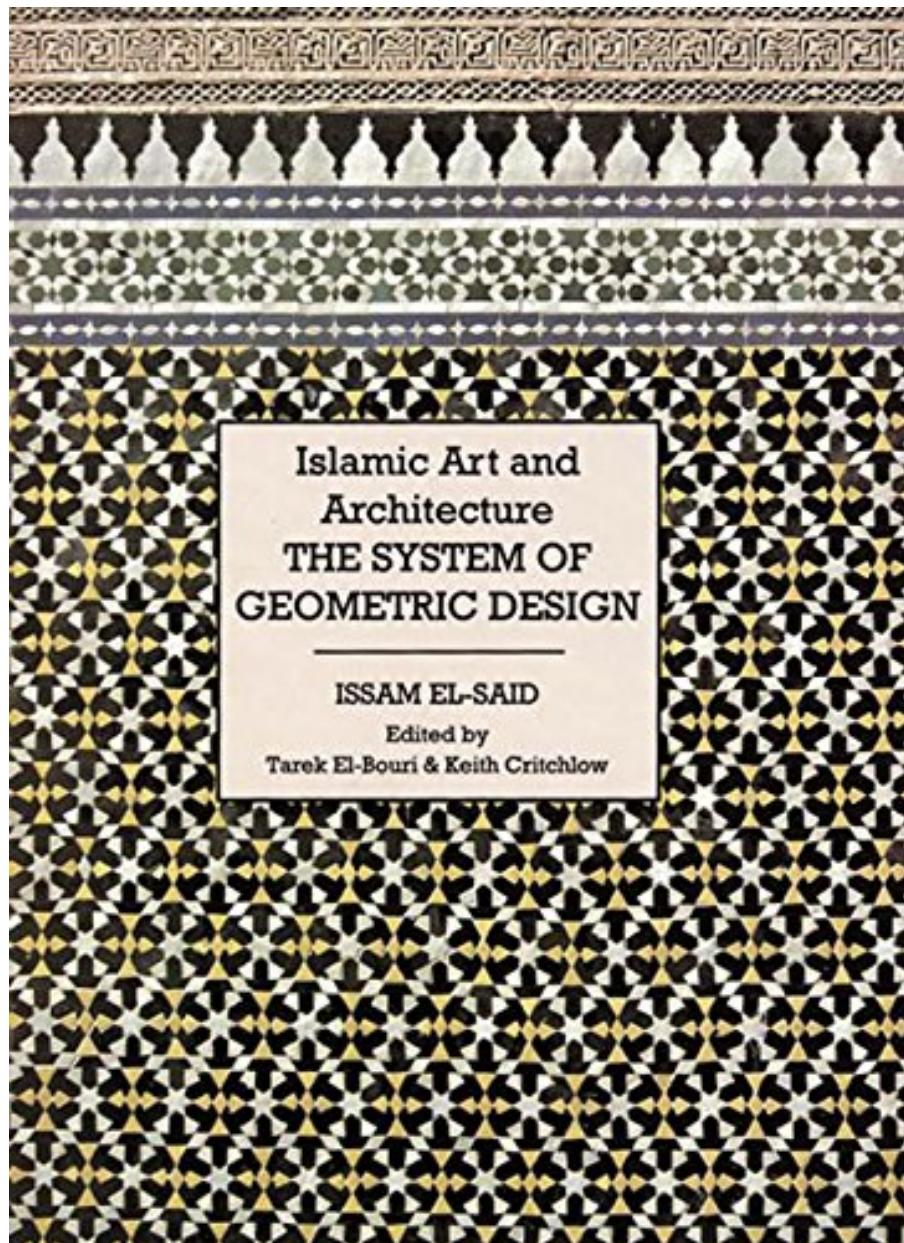


# ISLAMIC ART AND ARCHITECTURE: THE SYSTEM OF GEOMETRIC DESIGN BY ISSAM EL-SAID



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## Review

‘One need not be adept at measurement and computation to be mesmerized by and drawn into the visual analysis Said offers here.’

## About the Author

Issam El-Said (1938-1988) was an Iraqi artist and scholar. He earned an Architecture degree from Corpus Christi College, Cambridge in 1961; studied art at Hammersmith College of Art and Design, London and prepared for a PhD on the Methodology of Geometric Proportioning in Islamic Architecture at the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne in 1988, which was sadly not completed due to his untimely death that year. As an artist, he achieved great renown and his works are in private and public collections worldwide including the British Museum, the Victoria and Albert Museum and the National Museums in Baghdad and Amman.

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Issam El-Said pinpoints the rules of composition that form the basis of the geometric concepts of Islamic art. He then shows how intricate patterns are based on these basic principles. Fully illustrated in three colors to show the development of the patterns, this book offers an insight into how craftsmen and designers in the Muslim world achieved monumental feats of artistic expression using the simplest of tools. Chapter I presents graphical analyses of numerous complex patterns, to reveal the numerical rationale behind them. In Chapter II, the author analyses the system of measure used in ancient Egypt, before the use of numbers for calculating measurements. He shows how measuring cords and a geometric method based on a grid-pattern originating from the circle were employed by master craftsmen in the design of Islamic art and architecture. The book offers an insight into how craftsmen and designers in the Muslim world have achieved monumental feats of artistic expression with harmony and precision, using the simplest of tools such as a ruler, a string and templates, together with a system of measure that is both simple and sophisticated.

- Sales Rank: #566201 in Books
- Published on: 1998-02-14
- Original language: English
- Dimensions: 9.00" h x .60" w x 13.00" l, 2.46 pounds
- Binding: Hardcover
- 112 pages

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## Most helpful customer reviews

6 of 6 people found the following review helpful.

islamic art & Architecture Geometric designs

By Remy

good book but all in black & white don't expect any beautiful photos as examples. the ways they do these designs it is just what you 've got. Mathematics explanations only useful for experts but the drawings speak for themselves happily. Way too expensive, a souple cover and smaller size would have been enough

7 of 8 people found the following review helpful.

Deeper understanding of Islamic geometric pattern making

By Laith Wark

This book reveals the structures of Islamic geometric pattern making. There are quite a few "pattern books" with many examples of beautiful patterns. However this book reveals the concept of "the repeat unit of a geometric pattern" and the principles of measure involved. There are three main repeat units. It also contains many beautiful examples of patterns that can be generated by each repeat unit.

I thoroughly recommend this book for anyone interested in gaining a deeper understanding of Islamic geometric patterns.

Laith Wark

28 of 29 people found the following review helpful.

Shows tile design on Muslim monuments like the Taj Mahal.

By elwood@redland.net.au Noel Wood

If you are interested in high school maths or tiling in general this book shows how Islamic artists create most of the geometric tiling patterns found in Muslim monuments such as the Taj Mahal in India or the Alhambra in Spain. Issam shows how using the ancient greek techniques of a compass and a straight edge all of the tile designs are achieved. He also goes into the history of how these tile patterns were achieved. This book is written after Issam died from his notes and other previous work and is a summary of Issam's work so it probably represents the last chance to have these tile patterns explained. As a maths teacher myself I have never been so impressed by a book. It not only has great content but its diagrams are beautiful.

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