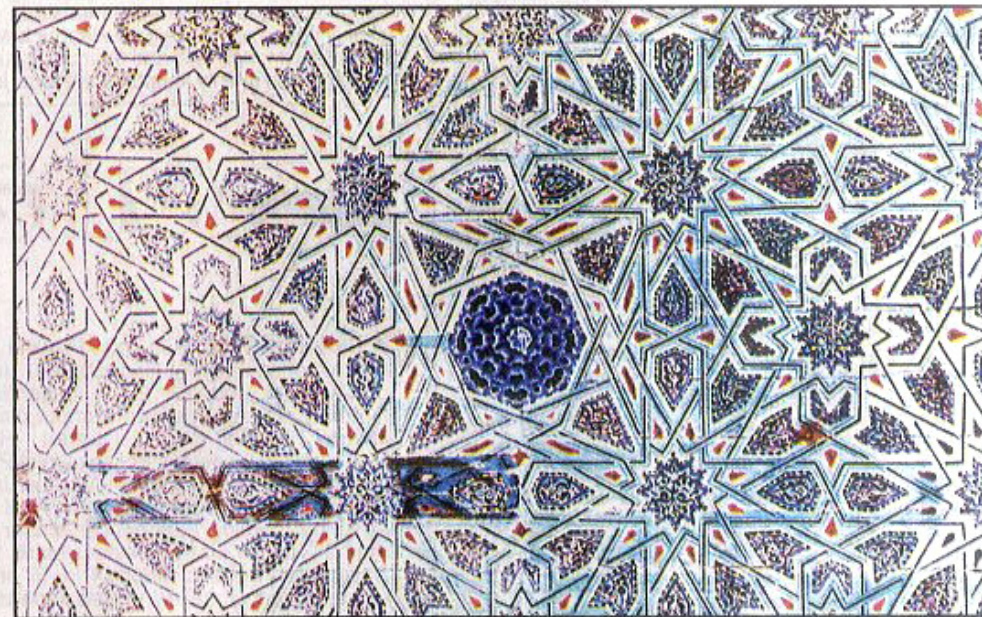
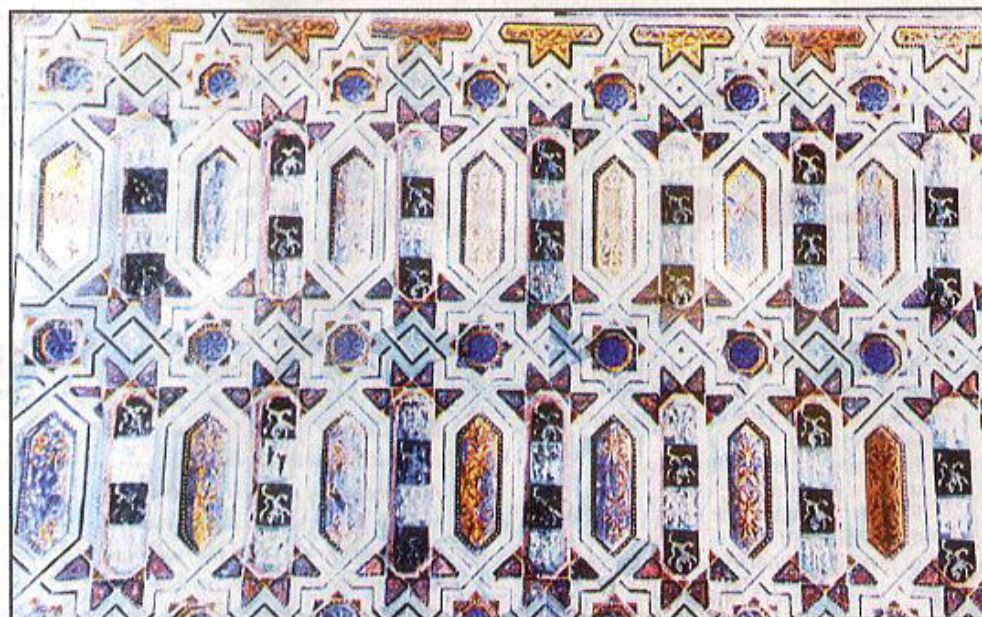




Sheikha Lulu (2nd left), pictured with some of the visitors to the exhibition.



Sheikha Lulu (right), explains some of the photos as she takes Spanish Ambassador around.



Some of the photographs by Akim Monet which are on display at JAMM.

Photos by Samer Shiker

Discover Islamic era of Spain through photos

JAMM exhibition depicts 'unity in multiplicity'

By Iddris Seidu
Arab Times Staff

KUWAIT CITY, April 23: Spain at the time of the Islamic era was the best of all civilizations where there were poets in literature, tolerance and a more, said Sheikhha Lulu Al-Sabah, founder of JAMM Art Consultancy, as she spoke at the launch of a two-week long exhibition of Akim Monet's photographs themed on "Seeking Al-Tawhid" at the JAMM Life Art Gallery in Shuwaikh.

The April 22-May 03, 2013 photo exhibition showcases Akim Monet's photo works which had color as the first element of seduction of the photographs where molten oranges, rich blues, lurid greens and purples satu-

rate the visual field with sheer exuberance teasing the eye with its baroque textures in a way that a Fauvist would envy.

Monet presents all these in reverse, printing directly what's on his negatives rather than inverting them into positive images. Doing this appeals to him aesthetically and conceptually. It is also for him the most direct transfer of how the light of a particular place and moment burns into sensitized film. Looking at the photographs, one does indeed viscerally sense the energy — the colors, smells and music of Monet's subjects in the magnificent photos on display.

Symbolize

The idea for "Seeking Al-Tawhid"

came to Monet while he was thinking about the longstanding non-acceptance of depictions of humans and animals in Islamic art, and the resulting development of the Arabesque in which abstract geometry and stylized organic motifs are used to symbolize, within the current manifest realm, that which is beyond manifestation.

The 45-year-old Swiss photographer pondered about a possible connection between the invention of this visual language, which leads the eye back and forth between the second and third dimension, and the practice of photography, in which the representation of three-dimensional subject matter is rendered on a flat surface.

He discovered the infinitely extensi-

ble designs in Islamic art, that are themselves made up of individual, self-replicating units that have been interpreted as visual demonstrations of the singleness of God and His omnipresence. They represent 'unity in multiplicity' and 'multiplicity in unity.' Technically, the term for this 'Oneness' is Tawhid, a belief in God's uncompromised unity and transcendence. The best-known expression of this Divine Unity is 'La-ilaha-ill-Allah,' (Quran 112:1): 'There is no god but God.'

Journey

With these thoughts in mind, "Monet did a journey around southern Spain and took pictures of Islamic architecture of famous places like AlHamra and of course that has a res-

onance in the Middle East. Spain at the time of the Islamic era was the best of all civilizations where you had poets in literature, tolerance and a lot more", said Sheikhha Lulu as she showed the Spanish Ambassador around the exhibition hall.

The JAMM founder also added that after Sept 11, 2001, a lot of museums around the world tried to show what the Arabs had achieved and there were a lot of moves through this period of time in southern Spain in particular with poetry and inventions.

There are fourteen photos on display as part of a larger series on offer at the exhibition and at a price of KD 950 per piece; the photos are quite affordable for the young professional.