

NEW SUNDAY TIMES

LIFE & TIMES

Sunday Reflections

STRAY FREE MALAYSIA

FAMILY PAGES 4 & 5



URBAN MAK YONG

HERITAGE PAGE 7

MIAMI COMPLEXITIES

SHOWBIZ PAGE 13

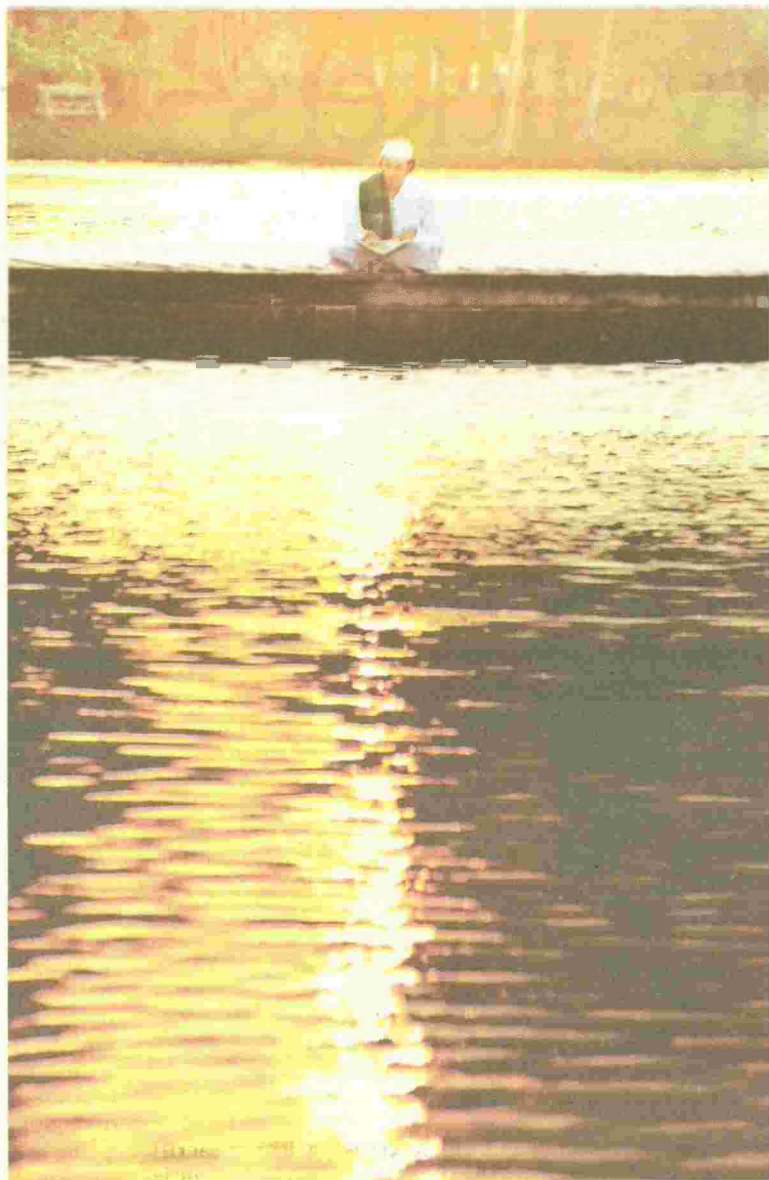


Absorbed in spirituality

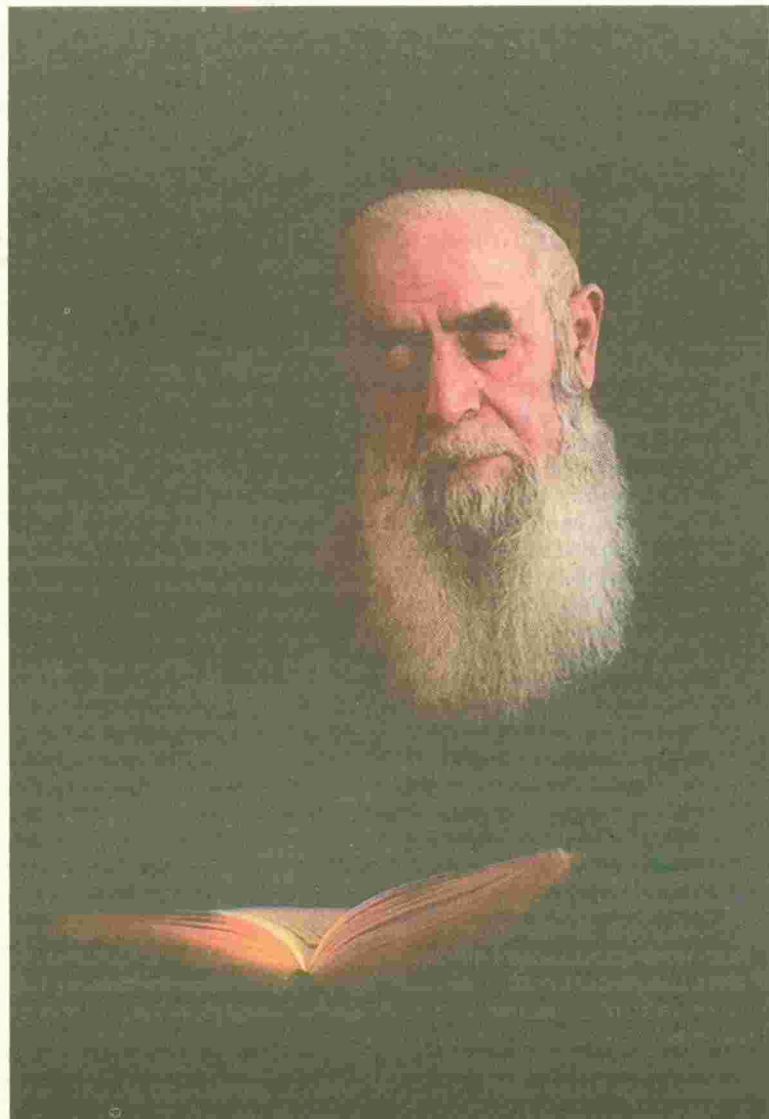
A photo exhibition captures the spirit of Ramadan

→ pages 8 & 9

LIFE & TIMES **ART**



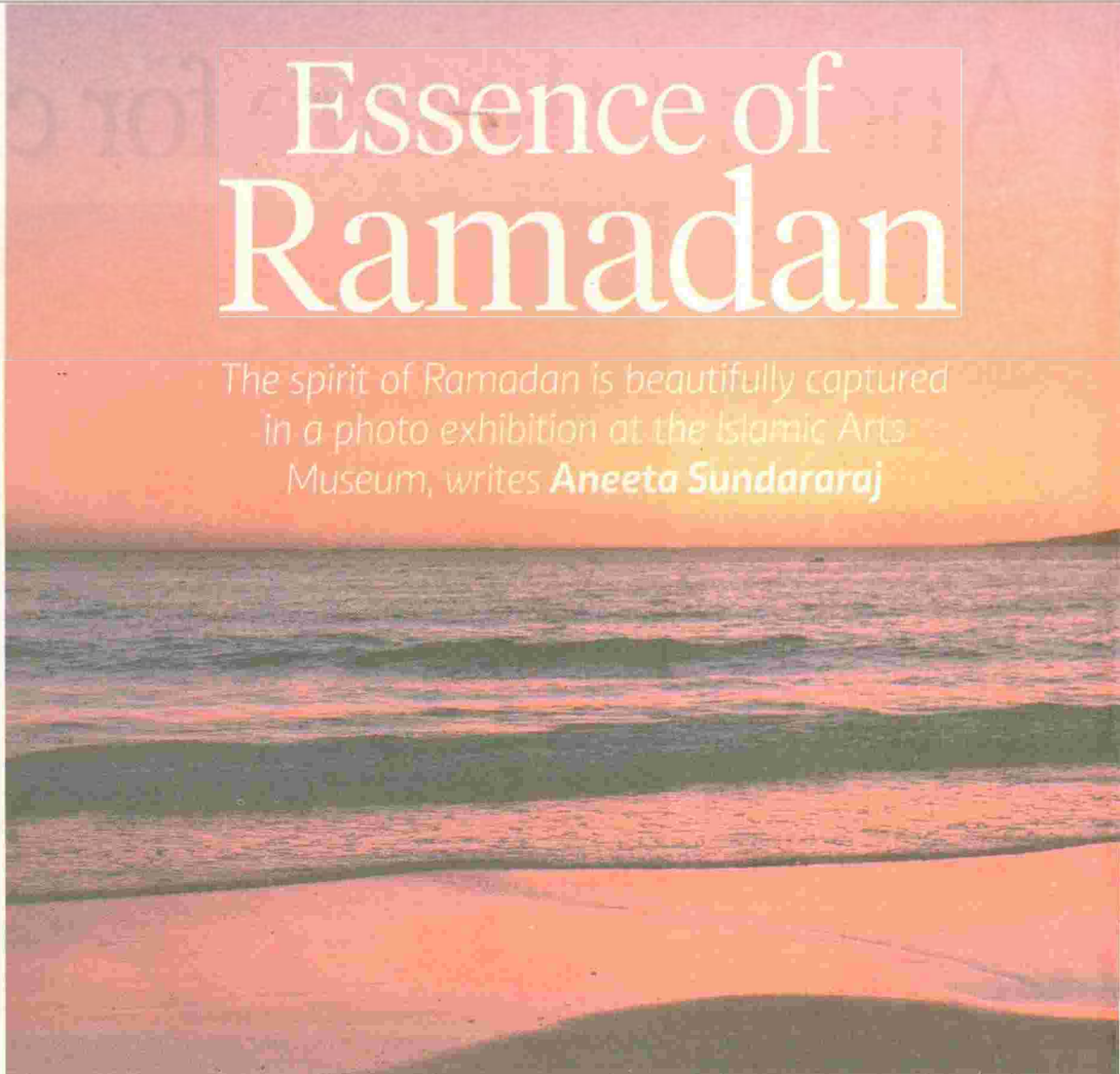
'Return to the Qur'an' by Megat Syazwan Othman.



An Old Muslim Sage.

Essence of Ramadan

The spirit of Ramadan is beautifully captured in a photo exhibition at the Islamic Arts Museum, writes **Aneeta Sundararaj**



RAMADAN is often regarded as a time when the faithful are required to reflect and contemplate on their lives. It is a unique opportunity to showcase the beauty of Islam through art, architecture and cultural diversity.

To this end and for the second consecutive year, the Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia and StudioBasel are presenting a photo exhibition titled The Holy Month Of Ramadan: A Visual Celebration — Capture The Spirit Of Ramadan.

Dr Basel Almisshal, 39, who founded this initiative says the idea is to educate and enlighten millions of people all over the world about the

celebrations that take place during the holy month.

An architect by training, he says: "There is a gap in the Islamic photographs collection. We want to inspire artists from around the world to capture these images so we are creating an opportunity through exhibitions and events like photography conferences."

The exhibition features 66 works by international photographers, from aspiring and talented amateurs to professional photojournalists and fine art photographers. They come from over

60 countries including Malaysia.

"Last year, we had over 30,000 visitors to the exhibition," says Izuan Fadzli Muhammad, the junior curator who is also the project manager for this exhibition. He highlights some of the more popular pieces and says the photographs are divided into three categories: Spirituality, culture and

architecture.

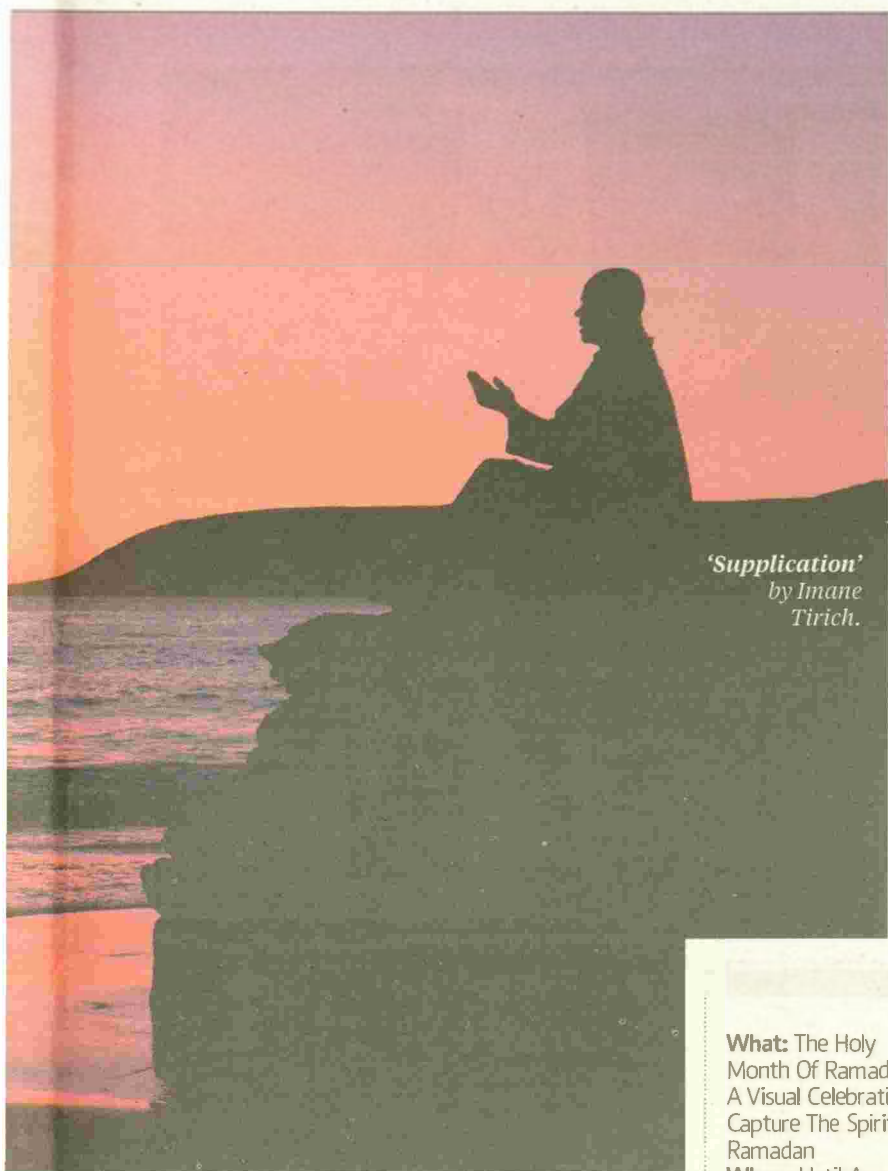
SPIRIT OF RAMADAN

Izuan, 34, points to one called *Zakat Collection* by Sudarno from Indonesia.

Cover picture: Fruit market in Ta'if by Louie Elias.



Prayers at Feroz Shah Kotla Mosque by Dheeraj Paul



'Supplication'
by Imane
Tirich.



'Sancak Mosque in Istanbul' by Bekir Dindar.

surrounded by foreign things, he still remembers the Quran."

One of the more sublime images is the one that bears the title *An Old Muslim Sage*. Izuan says it is of a Turkish man living in Germany. "We can tell that he's Turkish because of his appearance, outfit and skull cap."

Prayers At Feroz Shah Kotla Mosque by Dheeraj Paul shows that one can pray anywhere. "It doesn't matter where you pray as long as the place is clean," says Izuan.

An image that makes everyone stop in his tracks is undoubtedly Bekir Dindar's *Sancak Mosque In Istanbul*. "We're used to seeing mosques with domes," says Izuan. "Well, it's true. The dome is one of the basic structures of a mosque. You'd expect this mosque in Istanbul to also have a dome. That's one of the architectural elements of buildings from the Ottoman

Empire. Turkey has its own identity and is often considered the bridge between the East and the West. But this one is a more modern depiction of what a mosque can look like."

Finally, the image that has been chosen for the exhibition brochure is *Supplication*, taken by a young photographer, Imane Tirich, who shot the pictures in Maghreb on the northwest coast of Africa. Izuan says Imane, 25, is very talented.

"As you can see, with this exhibition, we hope to share a message that portrays the true essence of Ramadan," he says.



'Zakat Collection' by Sudarno.

What: The Holy Month Of Ramadan: A Visual Celebration - Capture The Spirit Of Ramadan
When: Until Aug 31
Where: Open Space Gallery, Islamic Arts Museum Malaysia, Jalan Lembah Perdana, KL
Details at www.iamm.org.my

Malaysia.

Izuan says: "It shows a youth reading the Holy Book. It's nice to see a young person today focused on something other than technology. Nowadays, there is so much attention on everything but Islam. With this ray of light pointing towards him, it's a message to me that we should return to the golden age of Islam."

For something more light-hearted, check out *Fruit Market In Taif* by Louie Elias. It shows a fruit vendor at his stall, with strawberries on his right and traditional types of Middle Eastern fruits such as figs on his left. He is, according to Izuan, reading the Quran.

"You see," adds Izuan, "the message here is that even though he's

"I like this photograph because it's a bird's eye view of people counting money collected for zakat (tithe). There are coins and notes — big ones, small ones, crumpled ones."

"The man stretching his leg shows that this has taken a long time. But the more important message here, for me, is that this involves money and the people counting it must be sincere in what they're doing. This money needs to go to the needy. You need to have trust and sincerity when counting the money."

With two children of his own, Izuan complains that the young today are too preoccupied with their gadgets and technology. "They don't know how to go out and play. There's even an app for *congkak*."

The reason for such a complaint becomes clear when he points to the next photograph, *Return To The Quran*, taken at Tasik Titiwangsa by Megat Syazwan Othman from

THE A-LIST

BY LILIAZURA IBRAHIM

BLACK AND WHITE EXHIBITION

Where: Vallette Gallery, 22 Jalan Bruas, Damansara Heights, Bukit Damansara, KL

When: Ends July 11

Admission: Free
CATCH the works of two award-winning artists Abdul Mansoor Ibrahim and Fuad Pathii, ranging from drawings to prints of endgrain wood engraving.

SEYRUSEFER - TRANSCONTINENTAL MALAYSIA

Where: Shalini Ganendra Fine Art, 8 Lorong 16/7B, PJ

When: Ends July 19

Admission: Free
AS part of the gallery's main Designer Glaze exhibition, four Turkish artists — Fidan Tonza, Funda Altin, Lale Dilbas and F. Mudje Gokbe — present their respective ceramic works. Be sure to look to the education component on modern ceramic practice.

LAGI-LAGI GILA-GILA

Where: Galeri Petronas, Level 3, Suria KLCC, Jalan Ampang, KL City Centre, KL

When: Ends July 15
Details at www.galeripetronas.com.my

Admission: Free
GALERI Petronas pays homage to Malaysia's iconic humour magazine *Gila-Gila* and its famed cartoonists, showcasing over 200 pieces of original artworks ranging from comic strips, editorial cartoons, rare first editions and sketches and drawings.



Jungle Jokes from Gila Gila.



Light in my darkness from Twisted Life.

TWISTEDLIFE

Where: Print Room, 49 Lorong 16/9E, Seksyen 16, PJ
When: Ends August 8
Details at www.theprintroomkl.com

Admission: Free
SHOWCASES the most technically challenging body of work by a small group of film photographers at The Print Room. Composed of subverted conventional still life narratives, alternative film processes and photos exposed to solarisation, we see how the photographers try to challenge established ideas.