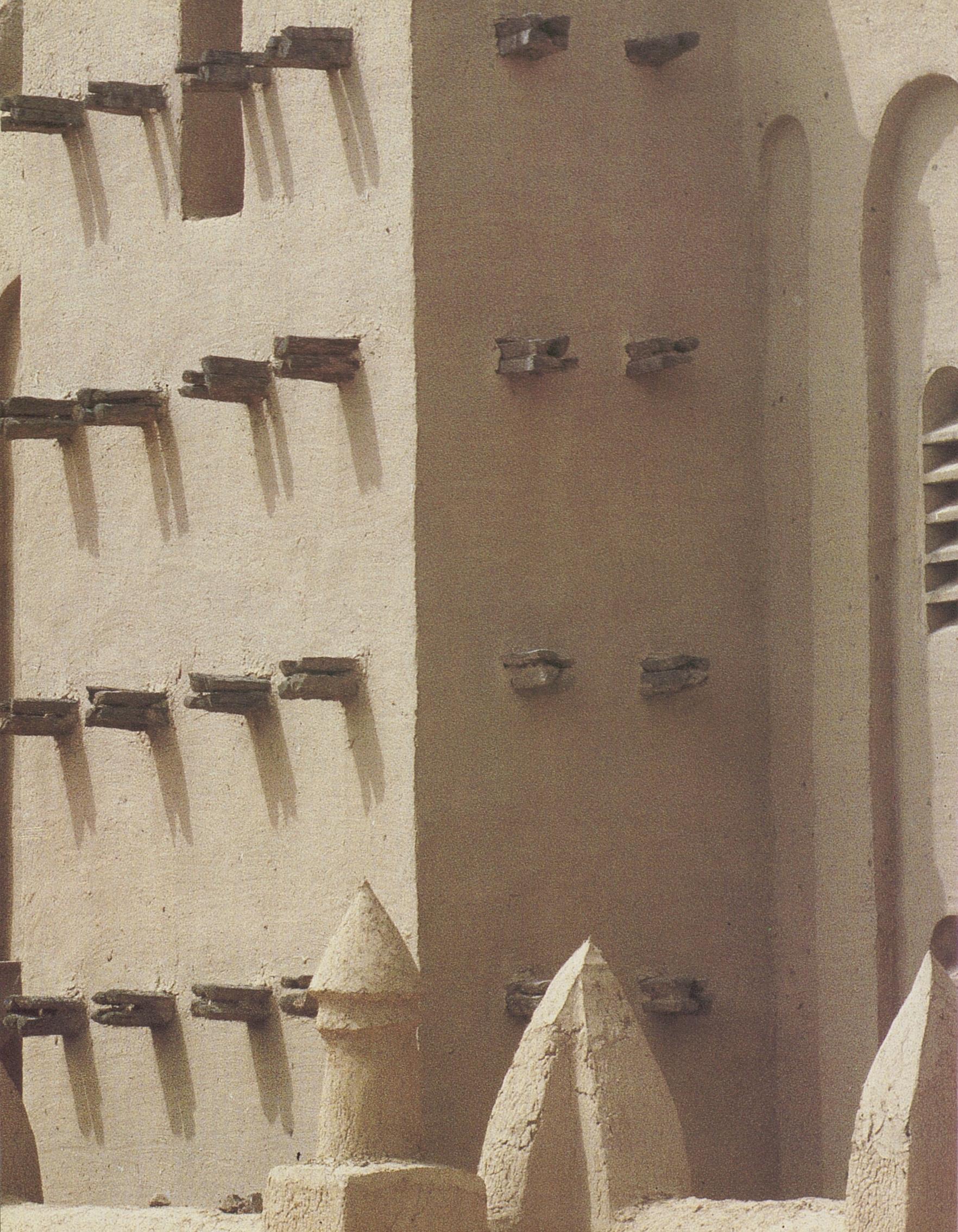


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RECIPIENTS  
OF THE  
SECOND  
AGA KHAN  
AWARD  
FOR  
ARCHITECTURE  
1983

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## STATEMENT OF THE MASTER JURY

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*Members: Habib Fida Ali, Turgut Cansever, Rifat Chadirji, Mübeccel Kiray, Charles Moore, Ismail Serageldin, Roland Simounet, James Stirling, Parid Wardi bin Sudin.*

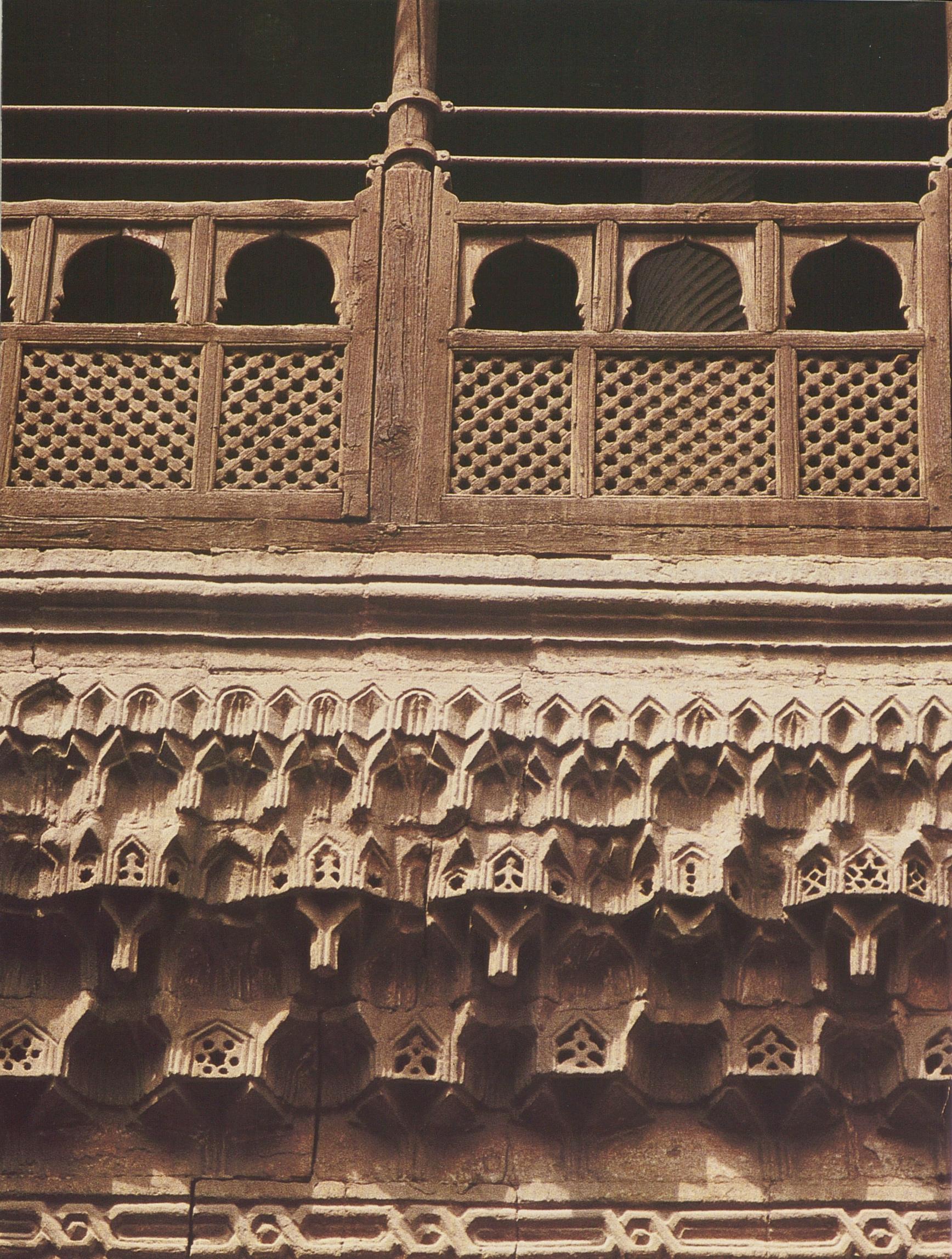
As members of the master jury we have carefully considered the 216 nominations for the second Aga Khan Award for Architecture in two separate meetings in Geneva, January 24–28 and June 20–24, 1983. At the first meeting, thirty-six projects were selected for detailed technical review *in situ*. In the second meeting we selected the eleven winners. Our deliberations in both meetings were considerably facilitated by the thoroughness and technical competence of those who prepared the project dossiers and undertook the detailed technical reviews, as well as by the outstanding support given to us by the Award office, the Award staff, and the secretary general.

In our task, we were guided by the terms of reference for the Awards, which stress recognition of those projects that “demonstrate architectural excellence at all levels”; that respond to their “social, economic, technical, physical and environmental challenges”; that nurture “a heightened awareness of the roots and essence of Muslim culture”; and that “have the potential to stimulate related developments elsewhere in the Muslim world.” We have also tried to respond to the felt need for reducing the numbers of winners to enhance the importance bestowed by the Award on the projects selected. It proved difficult largely because of the diversity of viewpoints among the jury members, and for some because of the breadth and variety of the projects considered, which reflect the scope and diversity of the Muslim world with its myriad challenges as well as the many different responses that imaginative individuals and groups have made to these challenges.

The eleven schemes premiated were retained by the jury, which was satisfied that they, in addition to their individual merit, collectively represented a sampling of the geographical range of Islam, from Mali to Malaysia, the problems of rural and urban populations, and of widely varying incomes in very different environments. The jury was in agreement that the projects, eleven from nine countries, fairly (though of course not completely) represent the richness and variety of the cul-

*Detail of qibla wall and minaret (left), Great Mosque of Niono, Niono, Mali. Pages 76–77: Detail of roof woodwork, Tanjong Jara Beach Hotel, Trengganu, Malaysia. Both designs incorporate traditional indigenous elements.*







tures of Islam. Here the agreement ended: no one on the jury saw the projects as equal in accomplishment, merit, or importance. The most widely held sympathies, probably, were for the three restoration projects. The Hajj Terminal, almost everyone felt, is in a class by itself, its structure a magnificent achievement of twentieth-century technology.

At the other end of the spectrum between the familiar and the surprising, even more controversially, lies the mud mosque in Niono, Mali, the work of a master mason building in the rich tradition of his country. Some jury members felt strongly that in spite of its elegance and beauty, it was not in a class with the architecture of more sophisticated societies, that it represents the last efforts of a traditional culture that cannot survive for long; other jurors saw it in its continuity and poetry as representing a major source of continuing inspiration.

In between these two comes the "white flower," as one juror put it, Sherefudin's White Mosque, probably the most widely (though certainly not universally) admired of all eleven, full of originality and innovation (though with an undeniable debt to Corbusier's chapel at Ronchamp) laden with the architect's thought and spirit, shared richly with the community, connecting with the future and the past.

The same spirit has gone more humbly into the Ramses Wissa Wassef Arts Center, a traditional mud-brick building with a casual though learned plan, in which the great glory is the light, falling on a collection of sculptures.

The other four entries are housing; they represent on the one hand the central importance housing has to our world and on the other the compromises and miscarriages that diminish the clarity of housing design and increase directly with the inhabitants' number, and inversely with their wealth.

The easiest housing problem then and the most elegant solution can be expected to be for a private house. The jury premiated an airy and handsome house on the Turkish coast, finely crafted in the local tradition. Another problem that promises achievable elegance is the tourist hotel: the jury picked two, in Malaysia and Tunisia. More difficult to confront is urban housing for middle- and lower-income inhabitants. The Hafsia quarter of Tunis is an important effort to deal with the problem, though flawed in execution and detail.

The jurors believe the projects should not be seen as equivalent in social importance or sophistication or elegance or technological innovation or depth of poetic feeling, but rather, as the 1980 master jury put it, as reflecting "the present stage of transition, experimentation, and continued search in Muslim societies. In most instances they represented not the ultimate in architectural excellence, but steps in a process of discovery, still an incomplete voyage toward many promising frontiers." As they did, we in 1983 also have selected some of the projects for their excellence in architecture but recognize that most of them "stand as accomplishments in this continuing search for relevant forms and designs that has already started and that must be supported."

Finally, we would like to salute the generous and continuing support His Highness the Aga Khan is giving to this most important search.

*Left: Detail of the upper-level madrasa, Fountain of Abd al-Rahman Kathuda, Darb Quirmiz quarter, Cairo, Egypt (see pages 92–97).*