Geometric Decoration | Geometric Decoration in Architecture

‘Interior walls were clad with panels and friezes, as if they were fine fabrics..’

Interior walls were clad with panels and friezes with geometric patterns in relief that would originally have been coloured, as if they were fine fabrics. This type of decoration appears in muqarnas in the West and in the East and was used on window cornices and arches. It is made up of interconnected prismatic parts of different shapes. Finally, geometric calligraphic decoration in kufic script adorns the friezes of religious and civil buildings.



Name:
Buinaniya Madrasa

Dynasty:
Hegira 751–6 / AD 1351–6 Marinid

Details:
Fez (Old Town / medina), Morocco

Justification:
The walls of the courtyard are covered with richly sculpted plasterwork above the ceramic plinths.



Name:
Qasr al-Hayr al-Gharbi

Dynasty:
Hegira 109 / AD 727 Umayyad

Details:
Syrian Desert, Syria

Justification:
The portico is clad with plasterwork panels with geometric designs (squares, rhomboids, circles, hexagons) that frame sections of floral decoration.



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Dynasty:
1165-1180 Norman

Details:
Palermo, Sicily, Italy

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Small, differently shaped prisms are combined to create a three-dimensional architectural element.



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Name:
Fragment of a frieze

Dynasty:
Hegira 296–467 / AD 909–1074 Rustamids of Sedrata

Details:
National Museum of Antiquities and Islamic Arts
Algiers, Algeria

Justification:
This frieze, which separate the roof from the wall, has an epigraphic band with the word baraka (blessing) repeated in kufic characters.



Name:
Teak Panel

Dynasty:
Hegira 3rd / AD 9th century Abbasid

Details:
The British Museum
London, England, United Kingdom

Justification:
Geometric decoration was also used on wooden objects, such as the doors or on pieces of furniture.
