

The Normans in Sicily | Royal Art and Architecture

'Ruggero II commissioned courtly art in which Islamic and Byzantine influences were added to existing Romanic-Norman elements.'

In 1130, the newly crowned King of Sicily, Ruggero II, began to commission courtly art in which Islamic and Byzantine influences were added to the existing Romanic-Norman elements of local art and architecture. This process was compounded by Ruggero II's successful campaigns in the coastal territories of North Africa and the Byzantine Balkan Peninsula, with their consequent forced appropriation of workers. This gave rise to a recognisable form of royal art and architecture that made it possible to identify secular and religious works commissioned by the crown.



Name:

Zisa

Dynasty:

1165-1180 Norman

Details:

Palermo, Sicily, Italy

Justification:

An elegant royal residence in the large park outside Palermo, with typical architectural and decorative elements in the Islamic tradition.



Name:

Cuba

Dynasty:

Between circa 1171 and 1180 Norman

Details:

Palermo, Sicily, Italy

Justification:

The Royal Pavilion in the large park outside Palermo used as a residence and characterised by Islamic-style decoration and architectural layout.



Name:

Castle of the Favara at Maredolce

Dynasty:

Hegira 388–409 / AD 998–1019; second half of the 12th century Fatimid (?) / Norman (?)

Details:

Palermo, Italy

Justification:

Surrounded by a lake fed by a natural spring, this residence was built on the site of an existing residence used by Kalbid amirs (governors of Sicily appointed first by the Aghlabids, then the Fatimids).

Name:

Uscibene

Dynasty:

Second half of the 12th century Norman

Details:

Palermo, Italy

Justification:

The Royal Pavilion located in the park outside Palermo used for pleasure, like the Zisa, Cuba and Castello della Favara at Maredolce.
