



# The Mashrabiya Project

**Ancient Architectures and Contemporary Ideas  
Across the Islamic World**

**Jennifer-Navva Milliken**

**Edited by Museum for Art in Wood**

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- The traditional art of mashrabiya brought to life by beautiful photographs and insightful essays
- Culturally specific craft paired with contemporary artistic practice
- The first publication dedicated to the study of the mashrabiya

The mashrabiya originated in the ancient world. As a scalable latticed window screen, whose intricate geometries developed with the spread of Islam, it provided ventilation, shade, and privacy to buildings. Today, as restoration efforts revive centuries-old architecture across Cairo and an interest in craft is rekindled by a global maker movement, the wood-turned mashrabiya are not only poignant metaphors for artists, architects, and writers but also sources of inspiration for nascent wood artisans. This publication, the first dedicated to the study of the mashrabiya, connects a culturally specific craft with contemporary artistic practice. Through photographs conveying the beauty and artistry of these wooden structures as well as contemporary works by leading artists, the complex beauty and meaning of the mashrabiya are brought to life.

**Jennifer-Navva Milliken** is the executive leader of the Museum of Art in Wood in Philadelphia and is responsible for creating and executing the exhibition schedule, facilitating the annual Windgate Residency program, maintaining the integrity of the museum collection and research library, as well as overseeing the Museum's publishing and documentation activities. She serves on the board of the Furniture Society and is a member of the International Council of Museums. Before coming to the Museum in May 2018, she worked as an independent curator and consultant, following her tenure as the Curator of Craft and Design and the interim curatorial director at the Bellevue Arts Museum. Before joining BAM, she established INTER ALIA projects, a curatorial enterprise based in Tel Aviv, Israel, and New York, NY. INTER ALIA fostered dialogues surrounding contemporary art, studio craft, design, and new media through site-specific pop-up exhibitions, gallery programming, writing, and advocacy for artists practicing in these fields. Milliken has lived in several locales including Jerusalem, New York, Seoul, and Tel Aviv. In addition to her time at BAM, she has been an embedded staff member at a number of cultural institutions and museums, among them the Museum of Arts & Design (MAD), New York, and The Israel Museum, Jerusalem.