

Traditional Art & Crafts in Pakistan

الخط العربي في باكستان

Arabic Calligraphy





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Arabic Calligraphy Exhibition



13 April, 2017
Venue: Ontario Legislative Assembly

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدَانَا لِهَذَا وَمَا كُنَّا لِنَشْكُرَهُ لَوْلَا رَحْمَتُ اللَّهِ عَلَيْنَا لَكُنَّا مِنَ الْخَاسِرِينَ





Contents

About Arabic Calligraphy	v
Ancient Pakistan: An Introduction¹	1
Pakistan's Islamic Heritage²: Calligraphy & Calligraph-Art	5
Introduction of artists participating in Exhibition: 'Allama bil Qalam	
1. Shafiq-uz-Zaman Khan	11
2. Ahmed Ali Bhutta	12
3. Abdul RazaqRazi	13
4. Abdul Rasheed	14
5. Afrah Fiaz	15
6. Ajab Khan	16
7. Fahim Hamid Ali	17
8. Hafiz Anjum Mehmood	18
9. Irfan Ahmed Khan	19
10. Nisar Ahmed	20
11. Salim Khan	21
12. Rashid Hussain Seyal	22
13. Maqsood Ali Lashari	23
14. Muhammad Asghar Ali	24
15. Muhammad Kashif Khan	25
16. M.A. Bukhari	26
17. MussarratArif	27
18. Master Mustafa	28
19. Rana Riaz Ahmed	29
20. Sabahat Anis	30
21. Seemi Mirza	31
22. Sehar Shahzad	32
23. Shamila Faizan	33
24. Shabana Nazir	34
25. Sumaira Amin	35

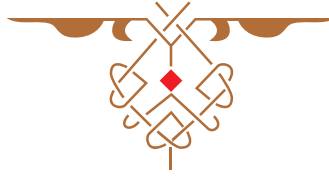
1 A brief account of Pakistan's ancient history.

2 Islamic heritage of Pakistan refers to cultural influence of Islam on its heritage as visible in traditional art, crafts, knowledge and skills including architecture, dress, cuisine, language, literature and other norms and pursuits. This article covers calligraphy and calligraph-art only.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي
بَدَأَ خَلْقَ الْإِنسَانِ مِنْ
تَلْحَمِ اللَّهُ





About Arabic Calligraphy

Calligraphy is the physical and spiritual manifestation of an art form dating back to the times of Caliph Ali Ibn Abi Talib (may Allah be pleased with him). Its development reflects the adherents' link with an entire civilization. This civilization influenced not only its contemporaries but also left an irreversible impact on several succeeding generations.

As an art form, calligraphy has attracted global interest and has found a place in societies across the world. Its treasures are housed both in Western museums and in museums within the Islamic world.

Pakistani artists are primarily inspired by their ancient traditions. They have incorporated these traditions in an exquisite portrayal of Arabic ABJAD (alphabets) in various styles as well as colourful painterly renderings. The work of these artists offers a study in the blending of ancient with the modern. While doing so, they remain deeply respectful of the sacred message.

This exhibition primarily contains art pieces from a private collection. Among others, those rendered by Mr. Shafiq-uz-Zaman Khan, the Chief Calligrapher of the Prophet's Mosque, Madinah Munawwarra are on display. The Prophet's Mosque in Madinah Munawwara is the highest seat where a Muslim calligrapher would wish to work in the whole world.

I wish to thank my team and all those who worked with us to make this event possible.

Imran Ahmed Siddiqui

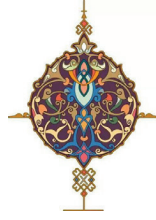
Consul General

30 March 2017

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

الْحَمْدُ لِلَّهِ الَّذِي هَدانا لهذا
والَّذِي كُنَّا عَنْهَا غافلين





Ancient Pakistan: An Introduction

Ancient Pakistan is a fascinating study of interaction among diverse cultures, languages, social systems and faiths. This interaction has imparted Pakistan a distinctive cultural identity that is essentially tolerant, pluralistic and accommodative. Watered mainly by Indus (*Darya-i-Sindh*) and its tributaries and bounded, inter alia, by majestic Himalayas, Karakoram and Hindu Kush ranges, shimmering Thar and Cholistan deserts, rugged hills and valleys of Balochistan and sparkling Arabian Sea, the land of Pakistan has cradled human habitations since the Paleolithic Age.

Ideas, arts and crafts produced in ancient Pakistan were disseminated to adjacent countries and regions including South, Central and East Asia by preachers, soldiers, traders, students and scholars. It was the territory of modern Pakistan where experts set rules of as ancient a language as Sanskrit, developed elaborate standards, *inter alia*, of weights, medicines and town planning, produced exegesis of sacred religious texts and created arts and crafts which remain most treasured part of Pakistan's rich cultural heritage.

About 25 kilometers from Islamabad, Pakistan's capital, flows the Soan, an ancient stream that gently raises its head at the foothills of Murree and winding through a tortuous path falls into Indus River near Kalabagh. At Rawat, within reaches of the Soan, researchers have found the oldest stone tools in the world dating as far back as 2.2 million years. Evidence of Palaeolithic culture was also recorded in southern Pakistan near Hyderabad, where a flint workshop was discovered at Ongar. The Sanghao caves near Mardan offer further evidence of contemporary human endeavours. Additionally, fresco paintings and engravings at the caves in Loralai and Musakhel illustrate the story of a prehistoric society in Pakistan. Many sites at DhokPathan, Kund, Morgah, Hyderabad, Rohri, Jamal Garhi and Khanpur belong to various stages of Paleolithic as well as Mesolithic ages.

Neolithic or New Stone Age (6500 to 2500 BCE) marked the beginning of human settlements in Pakistan as well as domestication of useful crops and animals, building of shelters with burnt bricks and experimentation with ceramics. For the earliest farming, wheat and barley were used. The first such settlement existed in



the eighth millennium BCE at Mehrgarh in Sibi. The settlement was established with simple mud buildings with four internal subdivisions. Numerous burials have been found, many with elaborate goods such as baskets, stone and bone tools, beads, bangles, pendants and occasionally animal sacrifices, with more goods left with burials of males.

Discovered by Jean Francois Jarrige and his team in 1974, experts found evidence of trans-regional trade as well as wheat cultivation at the site. The concentration of population in KotDiji, Sindh and Rehman Dheri, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa led to the development of higher civilizations.

Indus Valley (3000-1300 BCE) is one of the four mature civilizations of the world. Across 250 acres on a series of mounds, Moenjo-Daro, its prime city was the most advanced in contemporary South Asia. The city was governed as a city-state as no evidence of kings and queens has been discovered either in Moenjo-Daro in Sindh or Harappa, another city of the civilization in Punjab.

Evidence suggests that these two cities had profound knowledge of city planning. Both had evolved a uniform system of weights and measures and made bricks whose dimensions were in proportion of 4:2:1 considered in line with the ideal strength of the brick structure. Buttons made from sea shells and ivory combs were in use besides bangles worn by females. The practice of dyeing also relates to Moenjo-Daro. Archaeologists have found private bathrooms at the ground floor of most houses highlighting the use of flush toilets.

Discovery of figurines of dancing girls made Sir John Marshal reflect, “When I first saw them I found it difficult to believe that they were prehistoric; they seemed to completely upset all established ideas about early art and culture.”

Similarly, it is said that the earliest plough (animal drawn) and rulers used in the world were by the Indus Valley people. Interestingly, rulers were made of ivory. In the same vein, knowledge about weights and measures used in Moenjo-Daro also gradually spread to Central Asia.

Indus Valley Civilization is also the first literate civilization of South Asia. Goods produced by it were exported to Egypt, Sumer, and Ur, a fact that informs its international connections and knowledge of the world outside its boundaries. Indus Valley inhabitants were given the name ‘Meluhha’ by the Babylonians because of their fondness for sea voyages. The dikes built by the Indus Valley people are believed to be the first in the world. The *Rigveda*, one of the four canonical texts of Hinduism composed approximately between 1500 and 1000 BCE, describes Sindhu (Indus) as the cradle of civilization. The *Ramayana* mentions Sindh as part of the empire of Dasaratha.

Scholars from Harvard University, University of Wisconsin and New York University dealing with ancient civilizations in a project in collaboration with the Department of Archaeology and Museums of the Government of Pakistan, have opined that “a new study of artifacts” has revealed the presence of silk at the site

of Harappa. This indicates the use of silk by the Indus Valley Civilization.

After Mehrgarh and Indus Valley, Gandhara is yet another landmark on Pakistan's archaeological landscape. Situated in the northwest of Pakistan, its boundaries extended to Lahore in the east of Pakistan and to the west into Afghanistan. Occupying a prominent position at a crossroads, Gandhara facilitated ancient Pakistan's international relations.

Rigveda mentioned Gandhara as a tribe. In historical literature, it was first mentioned as "part of the Achaemenian Empire" during the time of Cyrus the Great. Over the centuries, it developed into a place where contemporary scientific, political, social and religious ideas, as well as art and crafts of diverse lands met and influenced each other.

Taxila, the ancient city of Gandhara has been described as the wealthiest in contemporary South Asia. Its prosperity resulted from its position "at the junction of three great trade routes: one from eastern India, the second from western Asia; and the third from Kashmir and Central Asia." It attracted distinguished preachers including Apostle Thomas and Apollonius of Tyna whose biographer Philostratus described Taxila as a fortified city that was laid out on a symmetrical plan and compared it in size to Nineveh.

King Ambhi of Taxila received Alexander the Great around 320 BCE. In the following seven centuries, Greek influence introduced classical traditions that became an important part of the Gandhara heritage. It is said that *Mahabharata* was recited for the first time at Taxila by Vaismpayana, a disciple of Veda Vyasa. Buddhist literature including Jataka mentions Taxila as a great centre of learning. Taxila was also visited by the famous Chinese monk Fa Hien in 405 CE. The city is mentioned in his travelogue titled *A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms*. Another well-known Chinese Xuanzang, also called Hieun Tsang, visited Taxila in 630 CE.

Analysts have expressed the view that the world's first university was established at Taxila. Called Takshashila University, it existed in the eighth century BCE. Analyst Janaka Perera opines that "this university, the world's oldest seat of higher learning" was in existence even before the time of the Buddha "and even before the Achaemenid rulers who occupied the Taxila valley in the sixth to fifth century BCE." Scholars opine that Buddha had undertaken a visit to Sindh. It is said that given the extreme dry conditions, special permission was given by Buddha to his followers to wear shoes when they traveled in Sindh.

Chandragupta Maurya, who later founded the Maurya dynasty, studied at Takshashila University. Chanakya (Kautilya) taught politics and diplomacy in the University where he wrote his masterpiece *Arthashastra*. It is said that Charaka, the famous ayurvedic physician who wrote *Charaka Samhita* was a product of Takshashila University. Atreya taught medicine and surgery at Taxila.

Scholars have emphasized that Greek populace in the Mauryan Empire converted to Buddhism after Asoka (304-232 BCE), a grandson of Chandragupta, became





a Buddhist. In the context of Hellenic influence, a reference could be made to the Kailash people in Chitral, who may well be the direct descendants of the soldiers of Alexander.



Under Asoka, Buddhism became the most popular faith in ancient Pakistan. The Mankiala Stupa near Rawat is an important Buddhist site. According to a legend, Buddha at this place “sacrificed some of his body parts to feed seven hungry tiger cubs.” Scholars believe that the “entire area from Peshawar to Gabral and the entire Dir Valley were stupa-studded.” There were “hundreds of monasteries” throughout these valleys. Now in advanced stages of decay, the remnants of such monasteries can be seen at many places in Pakistan including Mardan, Jamalgarhi, Shabazgarhi, Charsadda and Takht-i-Bahi.

Guru Padmasambhava, also known as Guru Rinpoche (the Precious Guru), was born in Swat which is not far from Islamabad. Considered as the ‘Second Buddha’, he is highly venerated in the entire Himalayan region especially in the Tibet region of the People’s Republic of China, and Bhutan. In his youth, Asoka, served as the Governor of Taxila. His son Mahindra, and daughter Sanghamitra, preached Buddhism in Sri Lanka, from where this religion is said to have spread to East Asia including Thailand.

After Alexander and his Indo-Greek satraps, many other groups took control of Gandhara including Sakas, Parthians, Scythians and Kushanas. The great Kushanas took keen interest in developing Gandhara into an important Buddhist center under Kanishka during the second century CE. The period of prosperity ended with devastating Hun or Hephthalite attacks during the fifth and sixth centuries setting in gradual decline of this great culture.

History places Pakistan at a central position on the world heritage map. The unique geography and cultural diversity of the country have shaped it as an inevitable forerunner of great cultural and political movements across South, Central and East Asia. While writing about ancient Pakistan, renowned scholar, Mr. Mukhtar Ahmad aptly remarked, “It is to this unique region that we owe much of our élan in South Asia.” In line with a great tradition, Pakistan remains a prime proponent and promoter of regional integration and connectivity as well as a culture of tolerance and accommodation for all. In fact, these are the most prominent traits of our ethos.



Classical Calligraphy & Calligraph-art in Pakistan

Muhammad Athar Tahir-Chowdhry

Classical Muslim calligraphy based on Arabic language and its script has had a long, hallowed and rich tradition in Pakistan. The chain of transmission of this art can be traced to the great period of Islamic rule – Abbasid Baghdad, Mamluk Egypt, Umayyad Spain, Ottoman Turkey, Safavid Iran, and Mughal South Asia – all of which saw a vast flowering of calligraphic skills.

Throughout Islamic history, the spirit of the Divine Word and its manifestations through the art of calligraphy have occupied a central role on the cultural stage. The written Word became in essence, to use Franz Rosenthal's term, the "second symbol" of Islam. Not only for its beauty and ornamentation but also for the spirit of the eternal message it carried, the calligraphy of Qur'anic verses and other largely religious inscriptions was revered, practiced, and commissioned.

From the early works in non-diacritical Kufi on skin, bark, and bone, to the more ornate Kufi and its seven variations; from the bold Thuluth to the slapdash skill of Shikasta; from the facilitative Naskh to the austere grandeur of Nasta'liq; from the Chinese brush-script to the several African and Saharan variations of Maghribi; all these styles have enriched the repertoire of penmanship while celebrating the glory of God and veneration of the Noble Prophet (peace be upon him), his family and companions.

While these styles were essentially utilitarian in purpose, in time, they acquired regional aesthetic and linguistic inputs to evolve a variety that is unprecedented in the calligraphy of any other civilization. As the Divine Word began to adorn and embellish the page, the art also began its aesthetic journey on to the walls of mosques where the Word and the underlying prompt – were highlighted, both to educate and awe.



From mosques, the calligraphed word traveled to walls of shrines, forts, palaces and to other monuments, both sacred and secular. The sacred or Islamic origin of the script began to permeate secular aspects of life. Muslims began to incorporate the written word in other fields of human endeavour. Beautiful writing began to weave its magic in cloth, appear on clay and metal vessels, on military arms and artillery, and a vast variety of domestic, public, and ceremonial objects.

With the arrival of Muhammad Bin Qasim in Sindh in 712 CE, Arabic script in the Kufi style reached this part of South Asia. From this landing to the conquest of Lahore by the Ghaznavids (in late 10th century CE) and to the present – a span of thirteen hundred years – an unbroken continuum of calligraphic tradition, at times flourishing and at others feeble, manifested itself through various forms and expressions. Two of the fourteen stone slabs discovered inside the mosque area at Bhambore, near Thatta (in present day Sindh Province of Pakistan), are dated 109 Hijra/727 CE and 294 Hijra/906 CE. Two other inscriptions of this period have also been found in the Tochi Valley in the north of Pakistan. Since calligraphic ability was closely connected with piety, the presence of Muslims in Sindh led to the emergence of two early centres of calligraphy at Mansura and Multan. Ibn Muqla's Naskh script had, by 952 CE, reached Sindh as the inscriptions at the mosques of Sukkur and Rohri show. Naskh became so widespread in Sindh that when the Sindhi language was accorded a standardized script (in the mid-19th century), it was this style that was chosen.

Calligraphy flourished under Malik Ayaz, the first Muslim-Ghaznavid Governor of Lahore (appointed c. 1037 CE). Schools of calligraphy were established as were workshops for presentation of ink and paper. The succeeding dynasties of the Sultanate period, the Slave Dynasty (1206-1290 CE), the Khilji (1290-1320 CE), the Tughlaq (1320-1414 CE), the Sayyid (1414-1446 CE) and the Lodhi (1451-1526 CE) all cultivated Thuluth and Kufi styles also.

The golden period of calligraphy in South Asia began with the Mughal Dynasty (1526-1857 CE), the first ruler of which was Zaheeruddin Muhammad Babur (1483-1530 CE). Temporarily removed from the throne, Babur's son Emperor Nasiruddin Muhammad Humayun (1508-1556 CE) went into exile in Persia, returning from where he brought artists and calligraphers in his retinue. These calligraphers then laid the foundations of the Mughal calligraphic tradition. The high regard in which the Mughals held classical calligraphy is evident from their royal practitioners who included emperors, princes, princesses and nobles. Patronage was showered and titles were bestowed on calligraphers. Nasta'liq was now widely employed in the production of manuscripts at Lahore, among other cities.

Emperor Jalaluddin Muhammad Akbar's reign (1542-1605 CE) was Lahore's finest period. Serving as the capital of a vast empire for fourteen years (1585-1599 CE), the city received tremendous impetus. An immense imperial atelier was established where the four major arts of the book, calligraphy, illumination (embellishment with abstract designs in gold and colours), illustration (the addition of

figural paintings), and binding (the adornments of the covers between which the leaves were protected) flourished. Numerous masters were employed to prepare and illustrate luxurious manuscripts and imperial codicils. Monumental calligraphy graced mosques, mausoleums (later including the Taj Mahal), charity wells, tomb-stones, cenotaphs, commemorative gates, educational institutions and celebratory plaques.



As the Mughal Empire began to fall apart in the early 18th century CE, the centre could no longer hold the vast territories. In its place, British rule gained strength, initially under the quasi-government of the British East India Company and by 1858 through direct Crown intervention. In this period of political decline, three important developments which had a direct bearing on calligraphy took place. One was the introduction of the printing press; second, the increasing trend of newspaper publishing; and third, the organization of the colonial system of education.

During the British Raj three centres of calligraphy re-emerged: Lucknow, Delhi and Lahore. Imam Verdi (d.1888), practicing in mid-nineteenth century Lahore, brought subtle, unparalleled changes in Nasta'liq and laid the foundation of Lahori Nasta'liq which continues to flourish. Verdi's work was then taken up by another great master, Abdul Majeed Parveen Raqam. Meanwhile in Delhi, Ustad Yousuf, a contemporary of Parveen Raqam, established the Delhi School of Nasta'liq. Following the independence of Pakistan in 1947, many of the Delhi-based calligraphers migrated to Karachi, thus influencing the practitioners in that growing city so that Karachi's Nasta'liq retains the Delhi features which are quite distinct from those of Lahori Nasta'liq.

Throughout most of the twentieth century, classical calligraphy was an important part of everyday intellectual and cultural life in Pakistan. The advent of computer composing in Nasta'liq still a distant prospect, calligraphers were largely employed by newspapers, magazines, printing presses and advertising agencies. In Pakistan, it was practiced at such ancient centers as Multan, Lahore and Peshawar, as well as newer places like Karachi and Rawalpindi. These centers spawned numerous schools which evolved around master scribes who included Ustad Yousuf Dehlavi, Abdul Majeed Parveen Raqam, Taj-ud-Din Zareen Raqam, Majeed Dehlavi, Hafiz Abdul Wahid Nadir al-Qalam, Haji Din Muhammad Almas Raqam, Syed Anwar Hussain Nafes al-Husaini, and Hafiz Muhammad Yousuf Sadeedi.

With the introduction of computerized scripts for Arabic and Urdu, calligraphers suffered a major setback. Opportunities of gainful employment dried up. The schools rapidly vanished. A few brave souls individually, and later collectively, persisted forming various forums for promoting calligraphy.

From the 1960's onwards, an art form distinct from the centuries-old tradition of classical calligraphy which, for want of a better term, may be called calligraph-art began to emerge. However, calligraph-art did not start as a unified movement.



Diverse influences in various parts of the Muslim world prompted artists and calligraphers to explore the potential of the written word in new and unprecedented ways. With little common ground except the urge to interpret text – initially sacred and then also secular – in visually creative contexts, there were simultaneous, often unrelated, movements for reinterpretation and fresh, modern calligraphic expression in every country and area where Arabic and languages based upon the Arabic script existed.

By the middle of the twentieth century, the written word, both on paper as well as on more monumental edifices, faced a visible challenge. The concepts of Western education, social values, and culture obliged a re-examination of Muslim priorities, heritage, and conventional mind-set. The term “calligraphy” now began to be used in an over-simplified and indiscriminate manner as the blanket term for any beautiful handwritten script. However, an incisive assessment of calligraphy and allied applications led to the recognition that a distinct genre had emerged in the last few decades of the twentieth century: calligraph-art. The exact point in time when this emerged is hard to specify just as is the point where two big streams start coming together is not always fully discernable.

There were several elements which contributed to calligraphy’s departure from classical norms. Amongst these, perhaps the most important was the tughra, the form in which the calligraphic seals of Ottoman sultans (and other notables) were developed. Although it drew upon traditional calligraphy, tughra transformed words into images. Yet another element was manuscript illumination; this art form did not compromise the main letter-shapes of the text but used bolder, non-conventional colors. Then there were decorative motifs such as clouds, twining tendrils, plants, flowers, palmettos, rosettes, trefoils, suns, stars, and interlacing, all secondary to the script. Similarly, zoomorphic calligraphy with forms resembling birds such as cranes, parrots, and eagles, animals such as lions, horses, tigers and human figures – pushed the limits of classical calligraphy and opened brave new paths.

Two other traditional practices also contributed towards the evolution of calligraph-art. The first were the qita’at (pieces) or single pages which prompted the viewer to see sheets of calligraphy and painting as entities in their own right. The mashq or practice sheet of a master calligrapher was another inspiration for calligraph-art. A single letter or combination of letters repeated again and again in close proximity resulted in patterns and designs. Though dismissed as objects of little consequence then, these exercises now seem strikingly contemporary.

In this process of transformation of a traditional art form into its modern creative expressions, artists and not calligraphers emerged as the pioneers who began to reshape the traditional roles and rules of calligraphy. The phenomenon that was not peculiar to Pakistan, but it was there that Muhammad Hanif Ramay and Shakir Ali took the Word to canvas and began painting it with Western concepts of composition and design.

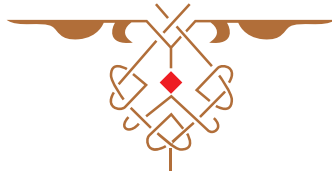
Calligraph-artists had to resolve the tension between the meaning of what is written and the form in which it is done in order to balance the purely visual or the outward with the inward wherein lay the meaning. Even when viewers shifted from one emphasis to another, the aesthetic and intellectual pleasures were mutually reinforced.



Calligraph-art is the meeting, mixing, and merging of Arabic calligraphy in all its traditional and/or personal interpretations with the aesthetic construct of Western painting and the Muslim sense of design and symbolism. The appeal is not only at the visual level but also at the intellectual. And unlike the calligraphers whose works are controlled and judged by pre-determined rules, calligraph-artists create their own rules even if these are, in most cases, not replicable and bear highly individualistic stamps. Calligraph-artists recognize that their words derive strength not only from the act of reading but that of viewing sans reading. With their distinct individual styles calligraph-artists can be seen to roam freer in imagination and creativity.

Within Calligraph-art, there are three interlinked and often overlapping subdivisions: the decorative, the illustrative, and the symbolic. Decorative calligraph-art is the earliest manifestation of this genre. Shakir Ali and Muhammad Hanif Ramay were amongst the pioneers of this form. Illustrative calligraph-art found its leading exponents in Sadequain who incorporated motifs such as clouds, leaves, and cactus-like forms to interpret, and give visual meaning to Qur'anic verses. Symbolic calligraph-art uses various painterly, sculptural, and graphic devices to capture the spirit of the words used, or to evoke an emotional response.

Calligraph-art in Pakistan continues to sustain a historic tradition by taking the basic flow of the shape of letters and words and creating variations to engage viewers – both classicists and modern – in their desire for unraveling the power of the word and its innate meanings.



Introduction of Artists:



Shafiq-uz-Zaman Khan

Mr. Shafiq-uz-Zaman Khan is a master extraordinaire of Thuluth. His status has been recognized by his incumbency of the extremely coveted position of Khattat al-Haram an-Nabavi ash-Sharif (Calligrapher to the Prophet's Mosque) in Madinah Munawwarah, for which he was selected through an international competitive process.

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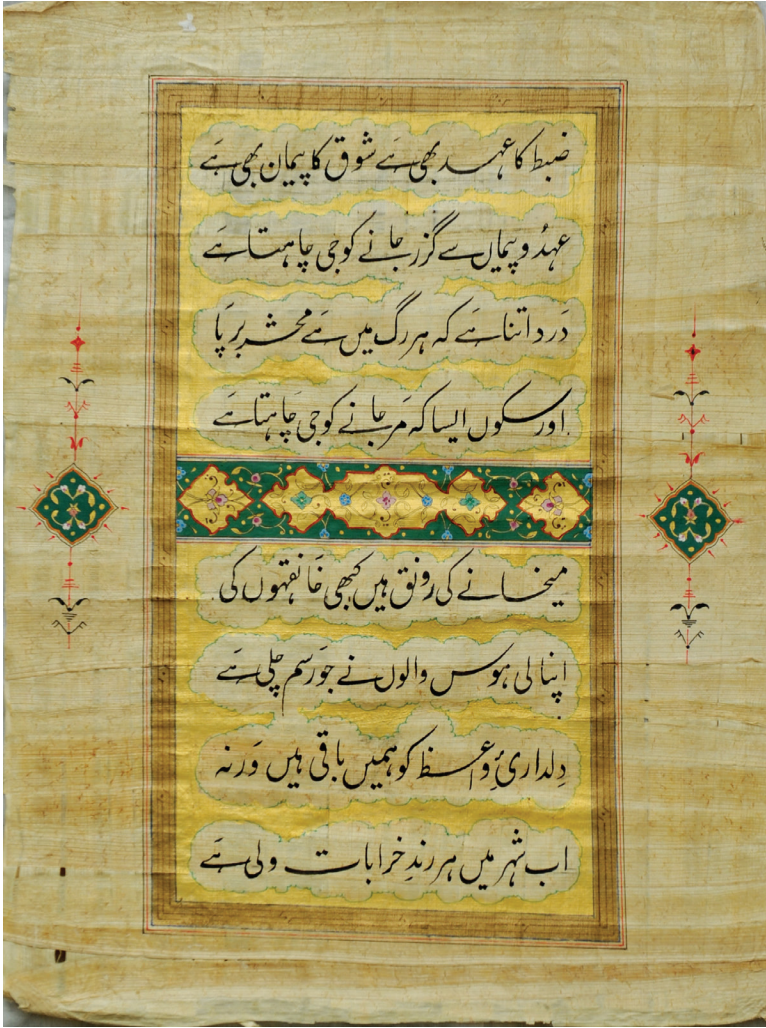


Ahmed Ali Bhutta

Ahmed Ali Bhutta likes to express his art in Nasta'liq, Naskh, Thuluth, and Kufi styles.

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Abdul Razaq Razi

Abdul Razaq Razi teaches at the National College of Arts, Rawalpindi Campus. He is an expert of all Arabic Khats (styles) and illumination.

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Abdul Rasheed

Abdul Rasheed's brush is unbounded by traditional restrictions. His style has received international acclaim.

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Afrah Fiaz

Afrah Fiaz's youthful energies have enabled her to combine Kufi and Naskh in a new style which is her own mark of distinction.

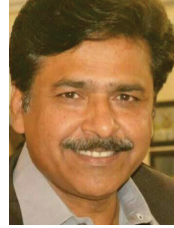




Ajab Khan

Ajab Khan is known for an innovative style in which he creates words by ingeniously using geometrical shapes.

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Fahim Hamid Ali

A mix-media artist, Fahim Hamid Ali believes in communicating with his audience through his art.

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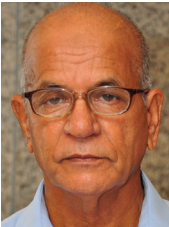
Hafiz Anjum Mehmood

Anjum's creative renderings have been inspired by master calligraphers particularly Shafiq-uz-Zaman Khan. He teaches fine arts at GC University, Faisalabad.



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Irfan Ahmed Khan

A master of all classical styles. Irfan Ahmed Khan has also produced his own style in Nasta'liq. He is a visiting Professor of Calligraphy at the Lahore College for Women.

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Nisar Ahmed

Nisar Ahmed takes his inspiration from the calligrapher of the Prophet's Mosque, Madinah, Shafiq-uz-Zaman Khan.

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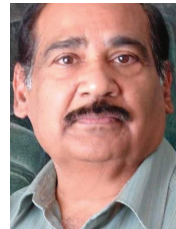


Salim Khan

An accomplished painter and sculptor,
Salim Khan emigrated to Canada in 1973.

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Rashid Hussain Seyal

Rashid Seyal is a versatile artist who has contributed immensely to the popularization of traditional forms of calligraphy. His experiment with new forms and styles is masterly.

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Maqsood Ali Lashari

A teacher of traditional calligraphy, Maqsood Ali is not only a practitioner but also an editor of documentaries and books about calligraphy.



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Muhammad Asghar Ali

Muhammad Asghar Ali blends traditional calligraphy with contemporary art. The use of dark and light basic technique makes his compositions striking and absorbing.

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Muhammad Kashif Khan

Muhammad Kashif Khan is a young calligrapher who has strictly upheld tradition in his works. His favourite styles are Naskh, Thuluth and Deewani.

Cell: +92-3332165106



M.A. Bukhari

M.A. Bukhari integrates cubism and Arabic words. He is known for an appropriate selection of colours which soothe and attract viewers. His specialty is printing the beautiful names of Allah (Asma al Husna).

Email: artist@mabukhari.com

Cell: +92-3002339013





Mussarrat Arif

Mussarrat Arif's work mostly reflects the composition of the western Kufi calligraphy using mix-media.

Email: mussarrat.arif@gmail.com

Cell: +92-3214995019

مصطفى
م. مصطفى



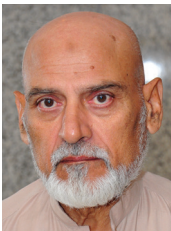
Mustafa Master

An award winning architect, artist as well as poet, Mustafa Master blends tradition with modernity. He lives in Toronto.

Email: mustafa@domusarchitects.com

Cell: +1-416-249-6687





Rana Riaz Ahmed

Rana Riaz Ahmed introduced the technique of 'pointillism' in calligraphy. Majesty of Quranic words and beauty of colours enrich his work and come together providing a unique visual pleasure.

Email: ranariazahmad46@gmail.com

Cell: +92-334684961

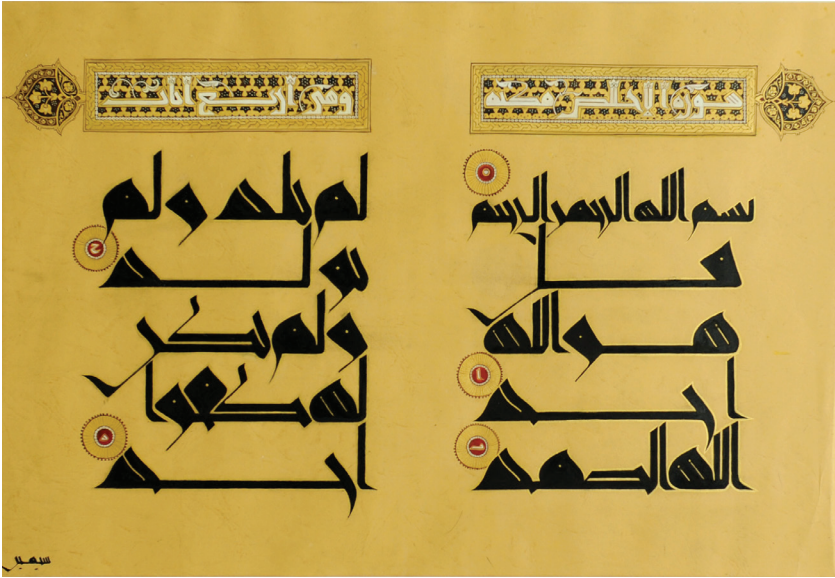


Sabahat Anis

Sabahat Anis' chief interest is in colour study painting. Saba has exhibited her art work in England and organized summer art camps for school children. She lives in Toronto.

Email: anissabahat@gmail.com





Seemi Mirza

Seemi Mirza has worked with a renowned collector of old Qur'anic manuscripts, Haji Muhammad Bashir Ambalvi. This afforded her an opportunity to study centuries old rare manuscripts and antique miniatures. Later, she produced traditional calligraphy using the miniature technique. Most of her work is in Kufi style.

Email: seemimirza@hotmail.com

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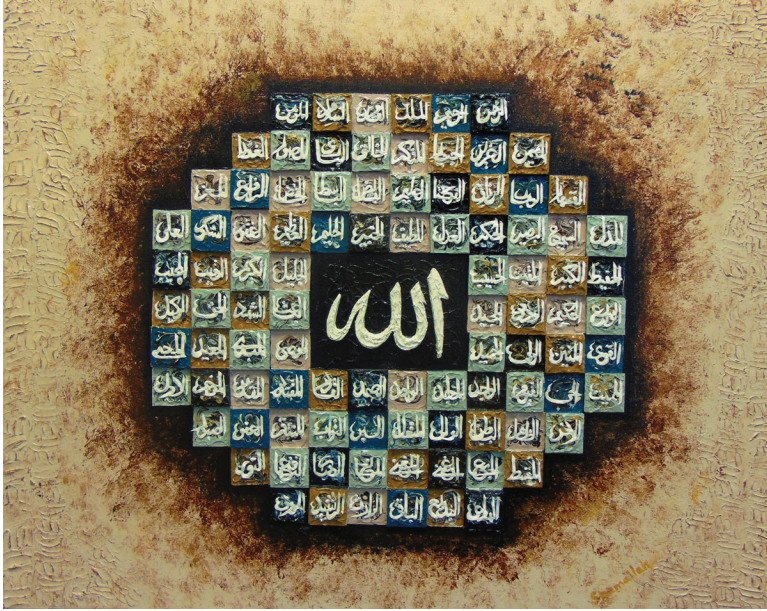


Sehar Shahzad

Toronto based Sehar Shahzad likes to use brush instead of reed to create traditional style calligraphy.

Cell: +1-647-293-1240



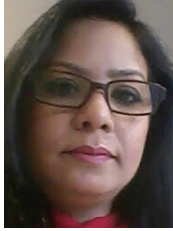


Shamila Faizan

Toronto based artist Shamila Faizan did her masters in textiles from Home Economics College Lahore. She works in mix-media textures and relief 3D effects.

Email: shamail.faizan@gmail.com

Cell: +1-905-805-5357

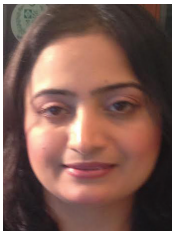


Shabana Nazir

Shabana Nazir is a student of Ustad Bashir, a well-known miniature artist. She uses miniature technique to produce calligraphy-art.

Email: shabana.painter@live.com
Cell: +92-3234945603





Sumaira Amin

An accomplished miniature artist, Sumaira Amin mastered the art of illumination in contemporary styles. She uses miniature technique to produce calligraph-art.

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