

**BRIDGES OF FAITH  
AND TRADITIONS**

*Come to the Opening Ceremony*

Opening Reception: **Monday, September 12<sup>th</sup> 2016**, 5:30 pm – 7:00 pm  
 Gallery One in the Government Center in Leesburg  
 On Exhibit September 12<sup>th</sup> through November 4<sup>th</sup> 2016

**Meet the Artists:**  
 Ahmed Ansari • Basim Alhashemi • Hassana Emran • Hamnah Rizwan • Israa Saad • Leila Elkabli • Layla Saad  
 Maha Mahmood • Noera Ayaz • Nabeeha Emran • Salwa Medani • Sabra Lutz • Shafia Talat

*Refreshments and more!*

Loudoun County Virginia  
**AAC**  
 Art Advisory Committee

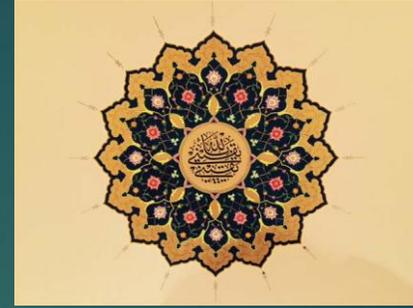
Sponsored by the Art Advisory Committee

Loudoun county Government Center  
 Lobby Gallery, 1 Harrison St. SE, Leesburg, VA 20175

# Bridges of Faith and Tradition:

## an art exhibition of works by Islamic Artists from Loudoun.

Exhibit Catalog, Published December, 2016  
 by the artists.



- ▶ The Exhibit was held from September 12 to November 4, 2016 in the County Government Center, Harrison St SE, Leesburg, VA 20175.
- ▶ Sponsored by the Loudoun County Art Advisory Committee.
- ▶ <https://www.Loudoun.gov/advisory-art>.
- ▶ The Loudoun County Art Advisory Committee (AAC) was created by the Board of Supervisors in 1978 to collect and display works of art that reflect the diverse Loudoun community. The AAC manages a large and growing permanent and loaned art collection as well as producing six art exhibits each year.

For more information about the Art Advisory Committee, contact Mita Mathur by email or phone 703-737-8768; or Elizabeth Bracey by email or phone 540-338-7973 For questions on the exhibit, email Larry Roeder at [roederaway@gmail.com](mailto:roederaway@gmail.com).



# Introduction

- ▶ *Bridges of Faith and Tradition* is the first exhibit of Islamic artists highlighted by the government of Loudoun County; but the show was not about advocating for a religion. Instead, it presented a unique opportunity to recognize the artistic forces from multiple generations of Loudoun's Muslim population, one of our county's fastest growing. Thus, its main mission was to be a vehicle for multi-cultural understanding and harmony.
- ▶ Bringing harmony through understanding was considered important when the project was proposed, given the great political stresses of today. It is therefore the hope of the artists that their art will be seen by Loudoun's citizens as a glimpse into the peaceful culture and patriotism that makes up Islam in our county.



Larry Roeder in front of a work by Ahmed Ansari

The artists are also grateful to the Board of Supervisors of Loudoun County and the Art Advisory Committee for this opportunity.

Larry W. Roeder, Jr. MS

Member, Art Advisory Committee

and Bridges of Faith and Tradition Exhibit Coordinator

## Message from Salwa Medani

- ▶ I really appreciate the opportunity provided for us to present our art. It made us feel like true artists. But I hope most of all that it will truly be a bridge between cultures bringing all of us together, sharing our common humanity.
- ▶ Thank you for all your effort towards a noble cause. May God bless you and your family.
- ▶ Sincerely,  
Salwa

## Message from Sabra Lutz

“We really appreciate having such a positive interaction with the greater community. The arts bridge many differences.”

Sabra

# The Venue: Gallery One

Gallery One is in a corridor between the entrance doors to the Board Room and sits behind glass cases in the main lobby of the Government Center.



Guests came from around Loudoun.



Many fine adjustments were made right up to the last moment.

ith and Tradition, November,

# Snapshots from the Opening Night.



s of Faith and Tradition, November,

# More Shapshots.



# Politicians Attended

like Koran Saines, County Supervisor for the Sterling District and in-coming Mayor of Leesburg Kelly Burk. This picture shows Kristen Umstatt, County Supervisor for Leesburg.



# Basim Alhashemi

“Nations Elevated by Morals.”

Oil colors and gold paper.  
48”x 60”.



Basim with family and friend by his engraving before delivery to the art show.

Also, the inspiration.



# Ahmed Ansari

“Allah”

48” x 48” Acrylic Mixed Media on Gallery wrapped canvass.

Ahmed was born and raised in Mumbai. While in college, he worked doing textile, jewelry and commercial design, including Arabic calligraphy. Ahmed then left India and worked for nine years as a graphic designer and art director in advertising agencies in the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia. In 1990, he immigrated to the U.S. when he was hired by an international advertising agency in Boulder, Colorado.

For more than 30 years, Ahmed's commercial work focused on digital media and web design.

In the last few years he has focused his attention on his life-long love of Arabic calligraphy and fine art painting.



# Ahmed Ansari

"As-Salaam"

48" x 48"

Acrylic Mixed Media on gallery wrapped canvass



# Noera Ayaz

12

“In Praise of God”

This art was inspired by the Qur'an.

“God is the light of the heavens and the Earth. His light is an inspiration for our striving for peace, dignity and equality. ”

Noera Ayaz, Esq. is a Board Director with Women in Islam, Inc.

“Women in Islam, Inc. was founded in 1992. Our mission is to advance the spiritual and intellectual development of women to empower them as dynamic participants in civil society and as advocates for human rights and social justice.”



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# Leila Elkabli

13

“Relaxed Company.”

The bison, an animal once hunted to the brink of extinction in the Americas, has recently become the first national mammal of the United States, putting it on a par with the bald eagle as a symbol of the nation.

Leila created this wonderful interpretation of our new symbol in honor of her love of America. It was an immediate favorite at the show.



Leila Elkabli and Larry Roeder

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# Nabeeha Emran

14

## “The Golden Girl”

A gentle ballerina, as delicate as gold leaves. She waits softly for something to wake her as the leaves coil around her.”

Nabeeha is a junior at Potomac Falls High School



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# Hassana Emran

“Peace”

It brings peace to see it and read it.

Canvas is 12"x9" and is done in acrylic paint and art markers.

Hassana is 14 years old and a freshman at Potomac Falls High School.



# Hamnah Rizwan

16



Meditation, 2016  
Photograph

(Age 14, Homeschooler - Ashburn, VA)

Photography is a type of art that is all about seeing things through different perspectives, which is what inspired me when capturing my two photos. I find that looking at things through a different eye and focusing on one aspect of an object accentuates the detail and beauty of the subject that cannot be seen from the distance. My photos are also aimed to stir up the emotions. I wanted to give the viewers a sense of Islamic art and its universal beauty.



# Hamnah Rizwan

17



“Minaret”  
Photograph

(Age 14, Homeschooler - Ashburn, VA)

While taking my photos, I decided to look for unique angles and perspectives to allow the viewers to ponder when seeing the art, as opposed to taking a flat picture with a plain angle.

In the Masjid (Mosque) photograph, I found the Minaret to be one of the most beautiful aspects of the structure and decided it would be my subject.



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# Sabra Lutz

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“Illumination,” 2015

20" x 20".

Acrylic on mat board  
in the traditional Rumi style.

This piece was created with gold illumination.  
The calligraphy in the center reads “Al  
harmdu lillah,” which translates to “All praise  
to God.”



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# Sabra Lutz

“The Beginning”, 2016

Acrylic on Board, 18x18

This Rumi style art piece surrounds a traditional Diwani style calligraphy that reads “Bismillah ar-Rahman ar-Rahi, which translates to “In the name of God, the Most Merciful, the All Merciful.”

Muslims say this at the beginning of every activity.



# Maha Mahmood

"My faith in God protects me."

March 2015

16" x 20" art board, framed in  
gold trim. Ink and acrylic  
paint



Maha at opening night

# Maha Mahmood

"Golden Dew", December 2014

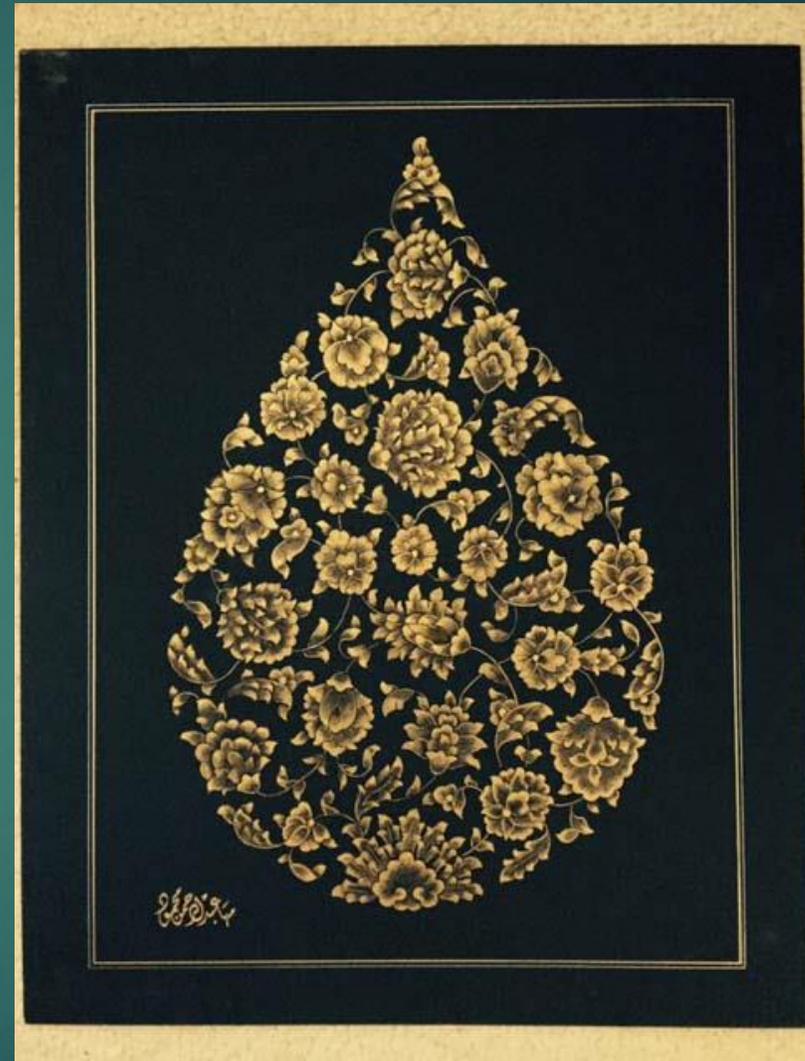
16" x 20" art board, framed in gold trim.

Ink and acrylic paint

"Islamic art absorbs me. As I work on a piece I feel I am on a journey traveling through history, spirituality and deep meaning. The repetitive geometric shapes, the colors, and selected pearls of written wisdom come together to please the eyes and inspire the spirit. My pieces connect me to the Middle East and Islamic civilization, which are part of my heritage and identity me as an American Muslim.

I am indebted to my teacher Mr. Abbas Al-Baghdadi, the master calligrapher of Iraq."

Maha

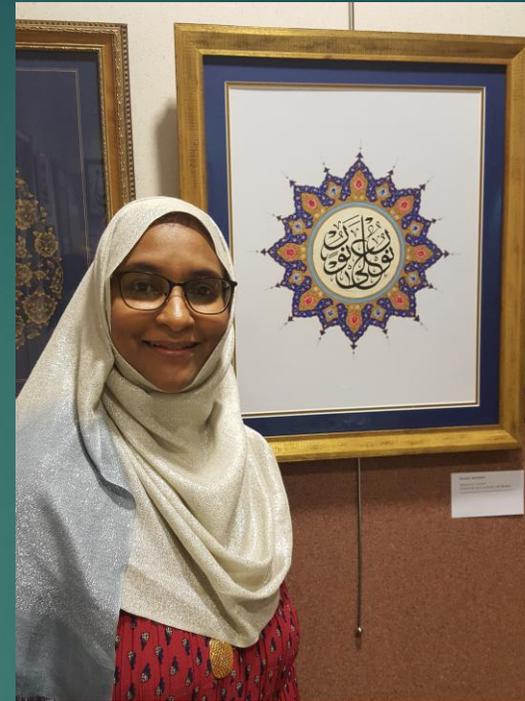


# Salwa Medani

Light Upon Light

16"x20"

Gouche and Acrylic Paint on art board



“The essence of our existence originates from the Light of all creations, “Light upon Light”.

This art piece is my first and favorite; it is full of symbols. The center is a circle symbolizing eternity. A delicate turquoise chain gracefully surrounds and protects the “Light upon Light” Arabic calligraphy, written in Naskh. Outside this core of “Light” shy pink flowers sway gracefully on sweeping vines while delicate leaves try to call attention to the tiny white flowers bashfully blushing with their tiny red centers. The bold pink and blue flowers take center stage in the warmth of the golden illumination or Turkish tezhip. To tie everything together, a sea of royal blue -befitting of the powerful light and delicate flowers- surrounds the group of designs. Small fortresses emit rays of light that spread out to fill the world! ”

Salwa Medani

# Salwa Medani

“Majestic Light”

16” x 20 art board

Gouche and Acrylic Paint

“This art piece is designed with tiny blue, white and orange flowers in acrylic on a green background. The intricate leaves are painted in gold in the Turkish tezhip style also known as illumination, while the Arabic Naskh calligraphy is written on specially crafted paper. “Majestic Light” stands tall in the center bringing out light to all creations on the heavens and the earth.”

Salwa Medani



Photo by Salwa makes it a double work of art with picture of the young girl studying in the background

# Israa Saad

Golden Petals," 2015.

8x10 Acrylic on Mat Board

“Golden petals “ is a traditional Turkish flower motif, made in Halkar style – using only gold against a dark background.

This piece was created in 2015 when the artist was just seven years old.



# Layla Saad

25

“One”

Acrylic on Handmade Paper

Size: 23" x 23"

Fusion calligraphy

2014.

This piece is a fusion of traditional Chinese and Japanese calligraphy with Arabic. The characters mean ‘God’ in all three languages.



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# Layla Saad

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“Ocean of Gratitude,” 2015

16" x 20." Spray paint and gold acrylic.

The Arabic lettering reads “Al-hamdu lillah wa ash-shukru lillah, which translates loosely to ‘All praise and thanks unto God.’”



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# Layla Saad

Ascension, 2009

Batik

Size: 19.5" x 23.5"

Building depicted is Dar al-Islam in  
Abiquiu, New Mexico

“The mosque in my daughter's batik piece is actually one that my father helped build. It is made entirely of adobe (mud brick) and is done in the traditional Egyptian style of masonry. In fact, the people who funded the project even brought over master masons from Egypt to oversee construction.

We used to play on the roof when it was being built and we saw it go up from brick one so it has a very fond place in my heart.”

Sabra Lutz



Layla Saad's Ascension was considered one of the three favorite images at the show.

# Layla Saad

“Cognizant”

Intaglio

26" x 19»



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# Shafia Talat

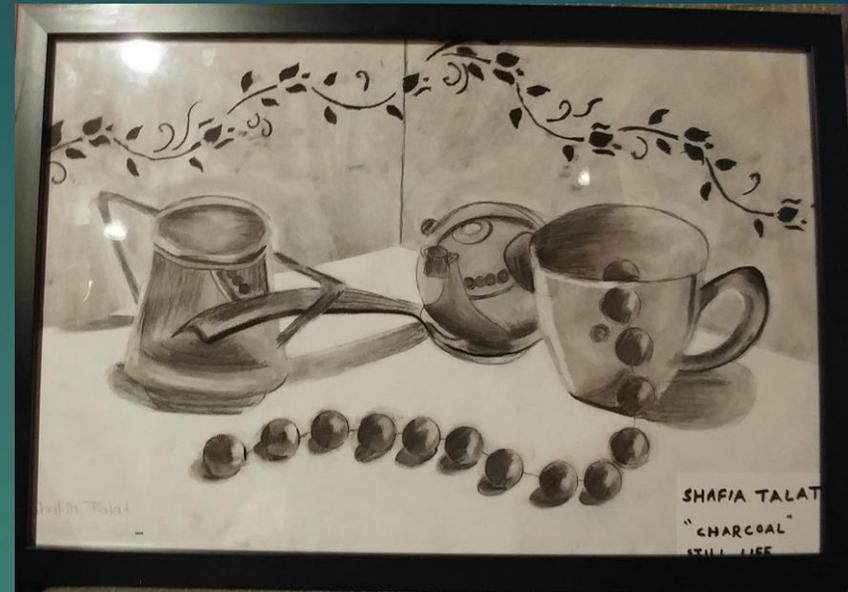
## “Charcoal Still Life”

Art is the best medium for me to express my vision and perspective. It allows me to bring out the positive in the negative and change things up to enhance one's perception.

My charcoal drawing allows viewers to consider the allure of utensils, how something so simple can be seen through another lens to make it look beautiful.

The change of perspective can lead to mind blowing outcomes. ”

Shafia Talat

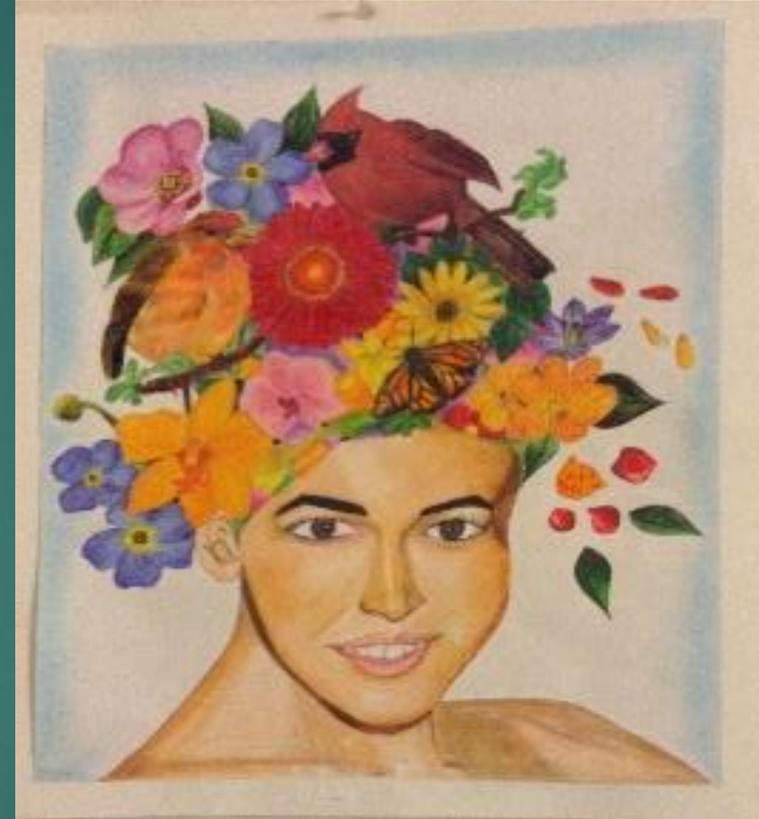


# Shafia Talat

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“Pretty Woman”  
Colored Pencils

In my color pencil art work, I portrayed the appearance of a beautiful and modern version of medusa when she acquires utmost joy.



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# What is Islamic Art?

- ▶ These pictures are made by talented Islamic artists of both sexes and several generations, showing many different styles.
- ▶ There is no question that Islam has its own artistic language, but the art today is a blending of styles, a living, breathing movement that can be as modern or traditional as any contemporary Western or Asian art.
- ▶ Art in general is a creative force that can motivate people to do good deeds, feel great passion or perhaps simply help individuals feel better about themselves and their environment. For some, great art is not even about an artist's intent; rather we simply enjoy them, the reasons varying from person to person.
- ▶ We have used the term "Islamic Art" to reflect the culture of people with origins in lands where the dominant religion is Islam. Faith, art, calligraphy and science are all encompassed in the term, which is really a western convenience; it need not specifically be about religion.
- ▶ The time line spans 1,300 years and examples can be found from Spain to Iran and western China or Loudoun County.

