

# MEET THE ARTISTS'





# SHAHEEN RAHMAN

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

As an artist, I find purpose in the Islamic art of Ebru (Turkish paper-marbling), an ancient practice that connects me to spirituality and my South Asian heritage. Infusing my faith and cultural traditions into each stroke, I celebrate the rich heritage of Ebru and its significance in Islamic arts and culture.

Through live Ebru demonstrations, I engage diverse communities, sharing the beauty and wisdom of this art form. My aim is to offer a positive narrative of my Muslim traditions, fostering understanding and breaking down stereotypes.

As the President of the Islamic Arts Society, I advocate for cultural appreciation and inclusivity. Additionally, as a member of the Houston Arts Alliance Board of Directors, I contribute to enriching Houston's arts and culture programs, promoting unity through art.

[studioartbyshaheen.com](http://studioartbyshaheen.com)

# MOINA SAJJAD

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Moina Sajjad, a mixed media artist, and calligrapher, blends Islamic architecture and calligraphy, embracing both tradition and modernity. Inspired by nature and spirituality, she earned an esteemed IJAZAH in Arabic calligraphy from Haji Noor Deen, transforming her artistic journey. Her art explores the delicate balance of light and darkness using diverse techniques, incorporating texture for depth. Thoughtfully selecting Quranic verses and Arabic letters, she creates visually stunning compositions that inspire curiosity and cultural dialogue. Through her art, Moina aims to captivate viewers, offering a sensory experience that celebrates the beauty of calligraphy's fusion with Chinese artistry.

# ELINOR AISHAH HOLLAND

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Elinor Aishah Holland, a skilled calligrapher in Arabic and Latin scripts, earned her Ijaza under Master Calligrapher Mohamed Zakariya in 2013. Teaching and exhibiting internationally, she leaves a lasting impact on calligraphy enthusiasts.

Her calligraphy has gained international recognition through exhibitions in Kuwait, Sharjah, Saudi Arabia, Algeria, and across the US, showcasing the timeless beauty and cultural significance of Islamic art.

For Elinor, calligraphy is a spiritual practice transcending aesthetics. Each brushstroke becomes a meditative connection with the divine, infusing her creations with captivating energy. Revering Islamic art as a precious gift from the Qur'an, she appreciates the profound meanings within the sacred text. Embracing her role as a perpetual student on the path of the Pen, she is committed to preserving and passing down this cherished heritage to future generations. Through her teachings and exhibitions, she inspires others to embark on their spiritual journey through the art of the written word.





# REEM TAKI

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

My name is Reem Al Taki, a Syrian artist, and former French literature student at the University of Damascus. After getting married and teaching French in Syria and Jordan, I decided to focus on raising my children. My life took a turn when my daughter, a medical student, discovered signs of cancer in me. Her timely intervention saved my life. Throughout the challenging treatment, I found solace in my talent for drawing and taking private lessons during chemotherapy. After four years, I obtained my license in Persian art. I want to encourage everyone not to fear any illness, especially cancer. With an optimistic outlook, any challenge can become a gift from God, transforming lives for the better.

[instagram.com/reemtaki60](https://www.instagram.com/reemtaki60)

# NIZAR MACNOJIA

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Nizar MacNojia, a Houston-based fine artist, seamlessly blends mixed media and calligraphic designs, exploring history and material culture. His specialties include still life, Islamic art, landscapes, abstracts, and portraiture, with Islamic art intricately integrated using unique mark-making techniques, vibrant colors, and intricate patterns.

Influenced by Western artists like Rembrandt, Guljee, Michael Angelo, and Leonardo da Vinci, Nizar stays devoted to Islamic art, with many creations centered around Sufism. His artwork serves the community as both an artist and an activist, being his "third eye."

With a captivating interplay of hues and shadows, Nizar's canvas comes alive with portraits, landscapes, abstracts, and authentic Islamic art harmoniously combined. Numerous successful exhibitions reflect his passion for spreading love, optimism, and the joy of colors. Each artwork originates from a blank canvas, brushes, and a vivid imagination, inviting viewers to experience another world. Inspired by lights, shadows, and reflections of inner souls, Nizar's art offers a transformative experience for both audience and the artist.



[nizarmacnojia.com](http://nizarmacnojia.com)

# NADIA MAKNOJIA

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Nadia Maknojia, a Houston-based artist, masterfully blends her Pakistani heritage with her expertise in Islamic Art. Quranic verses take center stage in her captivating creations, where modern painting harmoniously intertwines with traditional calligraphy and arabesque patterns. Beyond artistry, painting brings her joy and a profound spiritual connection, motivating her to serve the community by teaching art to children and seniors. The phrase "Nurun ala Nur," meaning "light upon light," holds deep significance for Maknojia, symbolizing the divine spark within each heart. Her work transcends aesthetics, embodying a profound sense of purpose and spirituality, reflecting her journey of self-discovery and unwavering dedication to creating art that inspires and enlightens.



[facebook.com/nadia.maknojia](https://facebook.com/nadia.maknojia)

# MUSSARAT ARIF

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Mussarat Arif, a pioneering Pakistani artist, revitalized calligraphic South Asian art with over 40 exhibitions worldwide. Her work reflects traditional South Asian identity, incorporating Islamic geometric symbols and elements like 'Ajrak,' the traditional clothing of Pakistan. Using diverse mediums like leather, copper, brass, wood, chili, and thread, Arif's art represents her Pakistani-Muslim identity and influences from her cultural history. "Fana," an intricate copper artwork, explores profound Sufism themes, symbolizing the annihilation of individual human will before the will of God—a transformative journey embraced by Sufi practitioners. With poignancy and depth, her creations reflect the essence of her identity as a Pakistani-Muslim woman, inviting viewers to explore connections with time, memory, and spirituality, leaving interpretation to each individual's experience.



# MONA RAJA

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Mona Raja is a Houston-based fine artist, calligrapher, and custom jewelry designer. With a background in design studies, she rediscovered her passion for calligraphy, Islamic geometry, and jewelry making 14 years ago. Mona has participated in various art festivals, learning from renowned artists like Haider Ali Truck Art and Haji Noor Deen Chinese Quranic Calligrapher. Currently studying Ottoman Tezhip and Quranic Illumination, her favorite mediums include watercolor, Gouache, acrylic, inks, and gold leaf on paper and canvas. In jewelry making, she excels in wire wrapping, wire writing, and calligraphy, using precious and semi-precious gemstones. Mona values creativity, community, and inspiring fellow artists.



# HINA CHAUDHRY

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Hina Chaudhry, a self-taught mixed media artist from Pakistan raised in Connecticut, discovered her love for art at a young age. Her journey led her to Islamic art and calligraphy, blending centuries-old styles with modern tools to create impactful and contemporary pieces. Art became her therapy during a difficult time, and her work evolved into a love story between The Creator and His creation, expressed through texture, color, and calligraphy. Her art, exhibited in reputable venues, delves into personal experiences while resonating with a broader audience. She invites viewers to reflect on the layers of story within each painting, uncovering a part of their own narrative. Hina now resides in Houston, teaching Islamic art and calligraphy to students across the United States.



[instagram.com/hinachaudhry.art](https://www.instagram.com/hinachaudhry.art)

# ERUM KHAN

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Erum Khan, a Pakistani American artist residing in New Braunfels, TX, developed a passion for art from a young age. After studying at the Karachi School of Art and participating in local competitions in Pakistan, she continued to nurture her artistic skills in the US. During the COVID pandemic, she decided to re-engage with local art galleries and exhibitions to showcase her talent. Erum's artistic journey spans acrylic, oil, calligraphy, sketching, and epoxy. Her mesmerizing paintings in oil and acrylic evoke deep emotions, while her calligraphy and sketches showcase raw expressiveness. Her recent exploration into epoxy art pushes artistic boundaries. Through her art, Erum invites others to embrace their creative spirits and embark on soulful explorations.



[instagram.com/erumsart](https://www.instagram.com/erumsart)

# SHAFaq AHMAD

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Shafaq Ahmad, born in Pakistan, is a multimedia artist with an impressive journey spanning various countries. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from Virginia Commonwealth University and a Master of Fine Arts from Texas Christian University. Previously an art glass designer, she collaborated with studios in the Czech Republic and Sweden. Her art glass designs are cherished in private collections worldwide. Now a multimedia artist, Ahmad has participated in numerous exhibitions globally, and her work is part of esteemed permanent collections. Through her art, she seeks to express the connection of the universal spirit of all living things, using luminous color, gesture, layering, and geometric shapes. The calligraphic marks symbolize infinite consciousness and the constant state of flux.



# SHERMEEN SIDIKI

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

Shermeen Sidiki, a Dallas-based artist, finds inspiration in Persian rugs and traditional Islamic architecture. Her art reflects her cultural heritage and explores Sufism's mystical depths. Shermeen skillfully integrates windows and arches, creating a celestial threshold, and inviting viewers on a spiritual journey toward the Creator. Her art weaves words and patterns with ancient tools like compasses and rulers, embodying timeless wisdom. Celebrating Islamic culture, her work exudes devotion and love for the divine.

As a non-traditional artist influenced by traditional art, Shermeen's themes revolve around spirituality and the pursuit of paradise. She uses geometric art, illumination, and Persian miniature to create a stylized-traditional approach that challenges viewers to reflect on contemporary life. Her art fuses East and West, offering a beautiful language to immerse and mesmerize the viewer with spiritual insights.



[shermeen.com](http://shermeen.com)

# AHMAD GHASSAB

## ARTIST

---

### Artist Statement & Biography

a Palestinian artist, calligrapher, and interior designer. He was born in Amman, Jordan to a refugee family and was raised with a true passion for drawing and painting. His father walked him through the basics of sketching and critiqued his artwork as it matured.

After moving to the United States for his education, Ahmad developed love and admiration for both Eastern and Western cultures as well as an insight into the struggles of different people around the world. His work embraces themes from his hometown of Palestine and the larger Arab world while also incorporating various motifs from his own life and experiences.

Ahmad aspires to be a humanitarian designer, working towards a simpler and more efficient approach to helping refugees feel home again, redesigning homes and cities following a natural disaster, assisting thirsty villagers access water, and making schools more accessible and enjoyable for eager students. Ahmad claims "I want to build a world where the displaced find a home, and the disadvantaged build a community." His artwork and calligraphy stretch across borders, unimpeded by boundaries, whether it brightens the hallways of the French embassy in Kuwait, warms the home of a loving family, or frames the path to excellence for youth at a local community center.



[instagram.com/ghassab.art](https://www.instagram.com/ghassab.art)