

# Aqeedat Ke Rang: Expressions of Devotion in Islam

Seminar: 21 - 23 March 2007

## Exhibition

### Calligraphic Paintings RAZA ZAIDI

Islam brought significant changes in different aspects of life. Islam believes in beautiful things. From 8th century we find a development in the field of Calligraphy. Persian and Arabic played a significant role in adding beauty in calligraphy. Various forms of Calligraphy were developed to beautify paintings and the monuments.

Establishment of Mughal empire in India in 1526 brought significant improvement in arts, architecture and craft. They had built Humayun, Itimadud Daula, Mumtaz Mahal's tomb and Taj Mahal. They are the combination of Persian and Indian features of architecture.

Mughal emperors, prince, princess, Ulema and nobles had taken keen interest in the development of arts of calligraphy. They not only did calligraphy on paper but important monuments were also decorated with the art of calligraphy. Pieces of Calligraphic art are preserved in India in National Museum, Raza Library, Rampur, Salar Jung Museum Hyderabad and in British Museum, London.

The whole, Muslim calligraphers in India directly influenced by Parsian calligraphers. Indian Muslims adopted "NASTALIO" as a national script and applied it considerably to urdu. The main characteristics of this script, which we may term Indian *Naskhi* are its heavier bold and more widely spaced letter. Its curves are also more perfectly rounded, which gives it a solidity that is lacking in ordinary *Naskhi*. These developments are fully consolidated under the Mughal Dynasty (1526-1857) calligraphy was especially favoured by the Mughal Emperors Babur, Akbar, Jahangir. The lost named so keenly admired and sought after the calligraphy of "Imad-Al-Din-Al-Husayani, that he promptly rewarded with a high rank anyone who presented him with a specimen by the hand of this great Persian Calligrapher.

I also have a deep and abiding in Persian, Arabic and Urdu Calligraphy. The manner in which calligraphy is used for its symbolic representation of the unrepresentable is a form of visual poetics. I have sought out examples of calligraphy, hidden away in museums and libraries in the west and sought to revitalize this eight centuries old art in the form of painting through colour and through form. I have attempted to bring their relevance to the present generation.

'Calligraphic painting'. In this style, an artist uses brush instead of reed pen, applies paint on canvas in place of writing with ink on paper. He combines words and letters skillfully so as to produce wonderful designs. Sometimes light and shade are to produce the three dimensional effect which is considered to be an important step forward in the field of calligraphy.

In 1978 I had also organized an exhibition of calligraphy in Lalit Kala Akademi AIFACS, New Delhi and also in other parts of India & outside such as Mauritius, Dubai and London etc.

**RAZA ZAIDI** A Freelance Artist, Professor and formerly Head of the Department of Arts : Art Education, Jamia Millia Islamia University; written and published a travelogue (Talash – e- Fun) about art galleries and museums of Holland, Paris, Germany, London, Belgium, Iran and also articles on M.F. Husain, Jaminy Roy, Amrita Shergill & Raja Ravi Verma; exhibited 25 Solo shows and 35 Group shows in India, Holland, U.A.E., Germany, Mauritius and London; he has represented in several private and public collection in India and abroad; he has traveled extensively and visited different Art Galleries abroad to study Painting; recipient of several awards and acknowledgements including Veteran Artist and *Kala*

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