

Arab-West Foundation and Arab-West Report rely mostly on contributions. So, donations are highly appreciated.

As a thank you, Arab-West Foundation sends donors who make a contribution of 300 or more Euros an original Coptic icon, a hand woven tapestry, or an exquisite calligraphy piece.

Please navigate below for information of the artist and his works, some of which you might be a fortunate recipient of.

Mahmoud Farag is an Egyptian calligrapher based in Maadi, Cairo who specializes in working with textiles. His artwork is beautifully presented on linen and includes wall hangings, pillows, bags and Christmas decorations. Since Mahmoud uses Arabic calligraphy for both Qur'anic and Biblical texts he works very much in line of what the Arab-West Foundation goals by creating respect and understanding for different religious traditions.

Mahmoud comes from a family of artists – working in the same tradition as his father and grandfather. It was in 1969 that he began his apprenticeship under the tutelage of his father. He soon developed his own ideas and in 1973 open a shop in Khayamia, Cairo – the traditional area for tent makers.



Traditionally applique is best known as the art of sewing pieces of cotton of linen cloth together in a geometric or floral design to create enormous works that are used as hangings in weddings, funerals and concerts. At the same time, the technique is used to much smaller items such as hangings – including calligraphic renders of popular and religious texts. In Arab culture such quotes and sayings are usually sources from the Qu'ran or the Hadith, however, Mahmoud also takes quotes from the bible.

In 1997, Mahmoud moved to Maadi to make his work more accessible to a broader audience, including non-Egyptians. Maadi is a part of Cairo where many foreigners live and are taken by this unique Egyptian art form.



Mahmoud has an extensive love for the shape of Arabic letters and their fonts, and has thus over time developed his own style of Arabic text writing. Calligraphy is done in Arabic of course but if requested Mahmoud places the translations in English on his artwork as well, or other languages, even including Dutch as he did for the former SGP Member of the European Parliament, Leen van der Waal.

Art by Mohammad Farag:

All of his work is original, and works are issued with a certificate of authenticity signed by Mahmoud Farag.

This tapestry shows an artfully drawn *Bismillah*, an Arabic phrase meaning "in the name of God," often translated as "In the name of God, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful."



The Holy Family in a boat on the Nile. On the left is the green fertile land of the Nile valley, and to the right are the pyramids with the desert and palm trees. (19 cm x 29.5 cm, packed in a red-purple gift box).



This artwork shows a delicately sewn lotus flower. The piece can be used both as tapestry and a pillow case.



The inscription of this tapestry artwork refers to the Bible, Luke 21:33:
"Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away."



The flight to Egypt according to Matthew 2, painted by the nuns of the Monastery of St. Dimyana for the Arab-West Foundation in The Netherlands (19 cm x 29.5 cm, packed in a red-purple gift box).