

Profile: Mahmoud Farag

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 or 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.



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

Arab West Foundation

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