3 Ghani Alani

Sura 3

God is He, the Living, the Everlasting.

There is no god but He, the All-Hearer, the All-Vidder.

He knows what is before them
and what is after them,
and they comprehend not anything of His knowledge
save what He wills.

His Throne compasses the heavens and the earth;
the preserving of them appertains to Him alone;
He is the Most High, the Almighty.

[Qur'an 2:255]

This well-known verse from the Qur'an is regarded as being especially potent and protective (see also cat. 8). Alani has inscribed it in muhaqqaq script (similar to thuluth) in the unusual format of a horizontal scroll.

4 Osman Veli Ali

Kaf ha ya ayn sad

Ink and gold on yellow laid down on cream-coloured paper, 1988

H 17.5 cm, W 18.3 cm

SWE0944

1996.7.18.01

Brooke Sewell Permanent Fund

This calligraphic page is inscribed with Chapter 19 ('Maryam') from the Qur'an in tiny muhaqqaq script written around the five boldly written letters in thuluth script, kaf ha ya ayn and sad, which appear at the beginning of this chapter. These single letters are some of 'the mysterious letters of the Qur'an' which precede 29 of the 114 chapters. They are imbued with magical protective properties and are often found engraved on amulets.
3. Ghani Alani

**Ya'rubu**

God.

There is no god but He, the
Living, the Everlasting.

Slander wearies him not, neither sleep;
To Him belong all that is in the heavens and the earth.

Who is there that shall intercede with Him
save by His will?

He knows what lies before them
and what is after them,
and they comprehend not anything of His knowledge
save as He wills.

His Throne comprises the heavens and the earth;
the preserving of them oppresseth Him not;
He is the All-High, the All-Glorious.”

(Qur'an 2:255)

This well-known verse from the Qur'an is regarded as being especially potent and protective (see also cat. 8). Alani has inscribed it in muhaqqaq script (similar to thuluth) in the unusual format of a horizontal scroll.

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4. Osman Waqifll

**Kif ha ya ay sad**

Ink and gold on yellow laid down on cream-coloured paper, 1990

H 17.5 cm, W 13.0 cm

SUSAN ROY

This calligraphic page is inscribed with Chapter 10 (Maryam) from the Qur'an in tiny neat script.

written around the five boldly written letters in thuluth script, *kif ha ya ay sad*, which appear at the beginning of this chapter. These single letters are some of the mysterious letters of the Qur'an which precede 29 of the 114 chapters. They are imbued with magical protective properties and are often found engraved on amulets.

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5. Nasser Mansour

**Kun**

Ink and gold on paper, 2000

H 48.0 cm, W 35.0 cm

JORDAN IX

BROOKE SEWELL PERMANENT FUND

In this composition the word *kun* (‘be’) is simply inscribed in baysic script. The word alludes to the phrase in the Qur'an, ‘and the day He [God] says “Be”, and it is’ (Qur'an 2:117).
Honeda follows the Turkish calligraphic tradition, but in innovative formats. These bold triangular compositions in jali将持续 script are inscribed in mirror writing, where the left side of the composition is written in reverse, one of the calligraphic traditions particularly popular in the Ottoman era. In each of the texts 'Allah' is at the top. The passages are from Qur'an 26:183 (6a), 55:25 (6b), 2:115 (6c).
7 Ahmed Moustafa
The heart of sincerity

The composition in mirror writing (see cat. 6) is inspired by Qur'an Chapter 112 ("Sincere religion"). The complete chapter, which consists of only four lines, is written out in its entirety in detached letter shapes with letters from it creating a bold symmetrical arrangement. All the letters have been given a numerical value. The numbers alongside the letters therefore indicate how often the letters appear in the chapter as well as the order in which they appear. Moustafa's work is based on his study of traditional Arabic calligraphy and the rules of proportion that lie at its heart, as expounded by the tenth-century Abulbari 'Alawi and calligrapher Ibn Muqla. Moustafa discovered that the exact geometric basis of proportioned script does not simply provide a mathematical rationale for Islamic calligraphy, explaining why this art form is so harmonious and aesthetically pleasing in its effect, but it implies something far more extraordinary: that the Arabic script-like music-is a finely tuned abstract vocabulary embodying universal mathematical laws, and therefore has the power to have an objective moral and spiritual effect upon the viewer. [Moustafa 1998: 12]

8 Ahmed Moustafa
The attributes of divine perfection

Oil and watercolour on paper, 2000
H 153 cm, W 140 cm
[NGME]

In this complex calligraphic work in several script styles, the central element is a cube, an embodiment of the Ka'ba at Mecca. It is open to reveal within each individual cube one of the names of Allah, the 'Beautiful Names of God', in square kufic. On the sides are the words 'Muhammad is the Prophet of God'. In the background is the 'Blessed verse' (Sura al-Fatiha, Qur'an 1:4). Interlaced with the words 'May his glory be magnified'. In the foreground is the verse from the Qur'an referring to the Names of God: 'Say call upon God, or call upon the merciful, whomsoever you call upon, to Him belong the Names Most Beautiful.' [Qur'an 17:110]
Ahmed Moustafa
The heart of slavery
Silkscreen on paper, 1976
H: 125 cm W: 96 cm
ECP95/4
984976-415

The composition in mirror writing (see cat. 6) is inspired by Qur’anic Chapter 112 ('Sincere religion'). The complete chapter, which consists of only four lines, is written out in its entirety in detached letter shapes with letters from it creating a bold symmetrical arrangement. All the letters have been given a numerical value. The numbers alongside the letters therefore indicate how often the letters appear in the chapter as well as the order in which they appear. Moustafa’s work is based on his study of traditional Arabic calligraphy and the rules of proportion that lie at its heart, as expounded by the tenth-century Abbasid vizier and calligrapher Ibn Maja. Moustafa discovered that

Ahmed Moustafa
The attributes of Divine perfection
Oil and watercolour on paper, 2000
H: 125 cm W: 96 cm
ECP95/4
984976-415

In this complex calligraphic work in several script styles, the central element is a cube, an emblem of the Ka’bah at Mecca. It is open to reveal within each individual cube one of the asma’ al-husna, the ‘Beautiful Names of God’, in square kufic. On the sides are the words “Mahammed is the Prophet of God’. In the background is the ‘throne verse’ (ayat al-kursi, Qur’an 2:255), interlaced with the words ‘May his glory be magnified!’, in the foreground is the verse from the Qur’an referring to the Names of God: ‘Say call upon God, or call upon the merciful, whoever you call upon, to Him belong the Names Most Beautiful.’

(Qur’an 17:110)
Haji Noor Deen Mi Guanjiang

In the seal (Chinese) script characteristic of the calligraphies of Chinese Muslim artists are the words 'O Men and Allah' (ya rahem), one of the 'Beautiful Names of God' (azma' al-a'zam). The Chinese inscription on the left consists of the date 'Winter Month, 2000'. The artist has signed his name in Arabic and added his personal seal, which bears his name in Chinese.
9. Haji Noor Deen Mi Guanjiang
Ya rahim
INK ON PAPER, 2000
H 29.0 cm, W 150.0 cm
CHINA
2005 1-17 01
BROOKE SEWELL PERMANENT FUND
In the kufi (Chinese) script characteristic of the calligraphies of Chinese Muslim artists are the words 'O Merajah' (ya rahim), one of the 'Beautiful Names of God' (Asmau al-Husna). The Chinese inscription on the left consists of the date 'Winter Month, 2000'. The artist has signed his name in Arabic and added his personal seal, which bears his name in Chinese.

10. Kamal Boullata
Nur 'ala nur
SERIGRAPH ON PAPER [1976], 1992
H 76.5 cm, W 56.0 cm (paper)
PALESTINE/FRANCE
1992 1-18 16
BROOKE SEWELL PERMANENT FUND
"Nur 'ala nur" ('light upon light') is from the Chapter of Light [al-Nur, Qur'an 24:35]: 'Light upon light, God guides whom He will to His light.'

Throughout the 1980s I have been alternatively using vowels from Christian as well as Muslim sources where the word 'light' occurs. Having been raised in a Jerusalem Christian Arab family I felt free to borrow words from the Holy Qur'an or from the Safin as well as from the Gospel of St John and from Church liturgy where the word appears. Light has been central to my work and it still is.

(Personal communication)
11 Samir al-Sayegh

_Allah_

SCREEN ON PAPER [20/40], 1996
11 7/8 in. x 19 1/8 in.
LEBANON
2005.7.24.03
BEQUEST STWILL PERMANENT FUND

Arabic and poet Samir al-Sayegh has been exploring the possibilities of Arabic calligraphy for many years. In this black-and-white composition he turns the word 'Allah' into geometric shapes.

12 Mounaer al-Shaarani

_By their fruits you shall know them_

COLOR AND INK ON PAPER, 1993
14 1/8 in. x 11 3/4 in.
SYRIA
COLLECTION OF DR. AMANI GARCASH

Shaarani has developed a characteristic calligraphic style, sometimes echoing traditional scripts. He is inspired by a wide variety of texts, which include ancient Arabic poetry and texts from the Qur'an. In this calligraphy he has chosen a verse from the Bible, Matthew 7:20, which is the title of this work.