

## Arabic Calligraphy Outside of Rules of Writing

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### **Abstract:**

The research dealt with the concept of Arabic calligraphy, its effect, how it developed? and how it can become an art and turn into a craft masterfully crafted? This research deals with the importance of Arabic calligraphy, how it was originated? and how the Qur'an spoke about it? This research aims to explain the Arabic calligraphy's aesthetic theory in the Islamic art, upon the following:

- Discover the aesthetic opinions of the Arabic calligraphy in the Islamic intellect.
- Identify Arabic line formations' esthetic relationships.

What are aesthetic opinions in the Arabic calligraphy? and what are the forms of Arabic calligraphy? How calligraphy is a part of Islamic culture and has its own ancient history? The research dealt with the types of Arabic calligraphy and how the calligraphy varies according to each country. How do peoples' cultures have an influence on the calligraphy and that each country has its own specific characteristics.

In this research, the researcher discussed the elements of the Saudi heritage. Researcher has done a lot of work with a different process, including printing materials with some techniques, painting on canvas, silk, ceramics, and textile, metal forming (Astana), animation, mosaic and graphic design. On the other hand, I tried to be professional in some of the areas I mentioned earlier.

Technology gave the best idea of the path it wanted to be in the future. The researcher does an artwork and draws a lot of drawings that pop up in his mind because he used art as a treatment for his bad mood or stress. The research dealt with how the Arabic calligraphy has very beautiful and wonderful forms. There are many Arabic manuscripts that are used to decorate homes or as very beautiful paintings. I have searched with many pictures indicating that, and showing the beauty of the manuscripts.

There are artistic movements that focused on art and advanced it like Constructivism and De Stijl. There are examples of contemporary artists such as Sherine Nashat, Josh Berreer and Dr. Salman Al-Hajri

### **Keywords:**

Calligraphy in Typographic Design ,Research Framework, Art and Movement, Contemporary Artistes, Contemporary Calligraphy.

### **ملخص الدراسة**

تناول البحث مفهوم الخط العربي، وأثره، وكيف تطور، وكيف يمكن أن يصبح فناً ويتحول إلى حرفة متقنة الصنع. يتناول هذا البحث أهمية الخط العربي، وكيف نشأ، وكيف تحدث القرآن عنه. يهدف هذا البحث إلى شرح النظرية

الجمالية للخط العربي في الفن الإسلامي، على النحو التالي:

- اكتشاف الآراء الجمالية للخط العربي في الفكر الإسلامي.
- تحديد العلاقات الجمالية لتشكيلات الخط العربي.

تناول البحث أيضا الآراء الجمالية في الخط العربي الحديث والقديم، وما هي أشكال الخط العربي؟ كيف يكون الخط جزءاً من الثقافة الإسلامية وله تاريخ قديم، ما هي أنواع الخط العربي وكيف يختلف الخط وفقاً لكل دولة. كيف تؤثر ثقافات الشعوب على الخط وأن لكل بلد خصائصه الخاصة.

في هذا البحث، ناقش الباحث عناصر التراث السعودي. قام الباحث بالكثير من العمل من خلال عملية مختلفة، بما في ذلك مواد الطباعة مع بعض التقنيات، والرسم على القماش، والحريز، والسيراميك، والمنسوجات، وتشكيل المواد، والرسوم المتحركة، وتصميم الفسيفساء والجرافيك. من ناحية أخرى، أعطت التكنولوجيا أفضل فكرة عن المسار الذي أراد الباحث أن يكون عليه عمله في المستقبل. يقوم الباحث بعمل فني ويرسم الكثير من الرسومات المنبثقة في ذهنه لأنه استخدم الفن كعلاج لمزاجه السيئ أو الإجهاد. تناول البحث كيف أن للخط العربي أشكال جميلة جداً ورائعة. هناك العديد من المخطوطات العربية التي تستخدم لتزيين المنازل أو اللوحات الجميلة جداً. لقد تضمن البحث العديد من الصور التي تشير إلى ذلك وتظهر جمال المخطوطات.

هناك حركات فنية ركزت على الفن وتقدمت به مثل حركات Constructivism و movement De Stijl. وهناك أمثله لفنانون المعاصرون مثل شيرين نشأت وجوش بيرر والدكتور سلمان الهاجري

### الكلمات المفتاحية:

الخط في التصميم المطبوع، إطار البحث، الفن والحركة، الفنانين المعاصرين، الخط المعاصر

## Introduction

Arabic calligraphy is mostly recognized as Islamic calligraphy where the work is fundamentally based on the Qur'an by the craftsmanship of renowned calligraphers. Today, the use of modern Arabic calligraphy, has developed a secular approach, and became more dominant especially in the fields of modern design such as graphic design. Calligraphers and artists are tackling Arabic calligraphy from an aesthetic and conceptual angle. They rely primarily on the composition and the beauty of the letter while delivering a message.

### 1. Research problem

Islamic Arts are featured prominently in universal art history, whereas it marked an important milestone in the aesthetic formulation, which including all creative art areas; such as Art of Arabic Calligraphy. Such calligraphy includes different and several linear formations and combinations applied on all materials such as the paper. Art of Arabic Calligraphy is deemed one of the arts indicating the Muslim artist's high level, and it is one mean of dialog in community, which associated with the Islamic nation, and its ideas emanated from Holy Quran and Hadith teachings, so that the Arabic script and letter reflected great importance. That was the 1<sup>st</sup> verse by which Allah started the Way (Revelation) – Allah said: "**Proclaim! And thy Lord is Most Bountiful, He Who taught (the use of) the pen, - Taught man that which he knew not**" (Surah Al-Alaq, verse 3: 5). Therefore, the Holy Quran has become a central pillar in Islam and the civilizational structure of Muslims, accordingly, the Arabic Calligraphy has a sacred position for the Muslim artist. In addition, the messenger "Mohamed" (PBAH) has urged the writing, reading and dissemination thereof between Muslims. whereas "for releasing any captive of Quraysh, he should teach several Muslims to write and read ", and for emphasis on

the good writing (calligraphy), as well as linking it to virtue and right, upon saying of Imam Ali bin Abi Talib, that he said, "The well script makes the truth clearer".

Therefore, the Arab enshrined in the Arabic calligraphy, and it reached the highest level of Tajwid (intonation), creativity and aesthetic, as well as its philosophical dimensions, which was represented in the use of Arab thinkers and philosophers, from aesthetic perspective. There are decorative outcomes, which had privileged in all Islamic ages, which has had a lot of art and aesthetic, development, and that indicates the artistic expertise and skills, as a level of creativity and aesthetic. That created special characteristics and properties for arts of Arabic calligraphy and the Islamic patterns. Therefore the aesthetic and feeling thereof represent one of the characteristics that the Muslim artist is unique to another artist. In addition, aesthetic may be inferred, when we reflect on what has been achieved during the phases of human civilization, reflecting the awareness and cohesion with the manifestations of nature. The Islamic Arabic calligraphy generally and Arabic calligraphy in particular demonstrate aesthetic intellect method, which is the basis thereof. Intonation of Arabic calligraphy is based on the foundations of individual taste generated by the Islamic intellect, and its uniqueness of taste for aesthetic, among the rules and basis of calligraphy, resulting special linear formations and combinations. As a part of functional and aesthetic dimensions' artistic work – in Arabic Islamic art, due to its role and philosophical dimensions represented in the usage of Arab thinkers and philosophers with its aesthetic perspective; it is found that there are attempts performed by the calligraphers and Arabic calligraphy philosophers. That is for developing the foundations and aesthetic relations, which adjusted the Arabic calligraphy and its outcomes, as a linear structure integrated functionally and aesthetically. (الألوسي 2008) Due to this area is not enough for studying the inductive artistic form to discover conceptually the creative dimensions of the esthetic characteristics. In case of the researcher performed a survey study in his specification – as per the aforementioned – he may determine the dimensions of the problem upon the following question:

❖ Is Arabic calligraphy deemed an Islamic art of aesthetic dimensions? (if "yes" the following question shall be answered):

❖ What is the Arabic calligraphy's aesthetic theory in the Islamic art?

### 3. The importance of research and need thereof

The importance of the current research is resulted from the importance of the Arabic letter, subject of the research, as it is one of our Arabic language infrastructures and an artistic and intellectual communication method.

It has an important role for transferring the meanings and ideas, by more effective methods, and tool of explanation of language-content and esthetic-dimension. (BERER, JOSH BERER, squarespace 2018) The importance of research and need thereof include the following:

- It may submit a specialized practical study, which includes the Arabic letter as a term generated by the cultural heritage and Islamic art, used aesthetically and artistically in a contemporary linear structure, which help to publish the awareness and the scientific knowledge for any person interested in this topic.
- This study may help to reflect references adopted by the calligrapher in his artistic work (including the Arabic calligraphy components of calligraphy), during his attempts to link

between the heritage and contemporary art, for explanation of the Arab Islamic identity. (BERER, ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY DESIGN 2014)

- It may create an analytical study of some contemporary calligraphers' work, used the Arabic letter for the aesthetic value.

#### 4.Objective of Research

**This research aims to explain the Arabic calligraphy's aesthetic theory in the Islamic art, upon the following:**

1. Discover the aesthetic opinions of the Arabic calligraphy in the Islamic intellect.
2. Identify Arabic line formations' esthetic relationships.

**The first topic:** aesthetic references of the Arabic calligraphy, published after the Islamic religious has urged to the Tawhid ("unification or oneness of God") against the Paganism; thereafter in the Arab Nation has experienced a shift in nature thought, cultural and behavioral orientation, and it was revolutionary movement on the beliefs and traditions. In addition, it was a fragmented situation, in which the Arab people experienced in such duration. Therefore the Islamic religious was a completed and coherent structure and integrated and balanced system of knowledge; it established the basic rules of life of individuals, and religious, intellectual, political, social and economic groups. Accordingly, the Islamic thought was the new point of achievements, which includes culture, arts and various areas of daily life. In addition, it started from "the formation of the doctrine principles by Islamic art, which are not deemed just religious teachings, but it has become a new idea, which its principal source is the Islamic Shariah, and its renewed source is the Islamic philosophy. (Alhajri 2019)

Thus, in the light of its new doctrine, it has distinguished with characteristic matches with the Islamic thought. The Arabic artist has begun to understand the principles of monotheism, philosophy and manner of viewing the world and universe thereof.

In this view, Islamic Art "comes out of the religion, relates thereto and inspired therefrom. However, it is not missionary or promotional art to serve Islam, but it interprets without translating situations into an artistic language personalized by such controlled engineering, which was inspired from the Nature..." Therefore, Islamic art has its own characteristics and properties, which differ from other arts, as Islamic Art is self-existent. (Neshat 2002)

"...it does not perform a specific religious job, which is not a compulsory deed of the religion..." It comes as symbolistic expression matches with the Islamic Doctrine as reflected by the Muslim Artist in its piece of art through depending on a set of styles to show moving away from reality. Furthermore, the Islamic Art was able to achieve two essential principles; the first – in addition to be a celestial art – aims to self-actualization and the second make the man think always in the greatness of the Creator and his ability. It is also a material art able to perform its daily role in the society as it was too linked to the life of a Muslim person, its equipment and daily use until it becomes an essential part of his life.

#### **Second Topic: Aesthetic Opinions in the Arabic calligraphy:**

Arabic Islamic Art is one of human and social activity's forms and its importance is determined as a basic factor in that activity, which shows the civilized culture of human and his spiritual reactions. Furthermore, it is shown as a man is considered to be a human being seeks to change his civilized and natural reality and transfer it to what is proper to his developed needs. (سعيد 1988) Arabic Islamic Art as a system is one of knowledge means equal – on the basis of value

and importance – to science and philosophy. The man – through such art – can understand his environment and human existence. There is no nation has dealt with the formation of Arabic calligraphy (Letter, its creation, improvement of its engineering and decoration like the Arabic Nation as it is related to the Islamic Doctrine. In addition, Islam has made the calligraphy and its perfection as fee and guerdon. According to the Messenger "Muhammad" (peace be upon him) said, "The best amongst you is the one who learns the Quran and teaches It.", that made from the calligraphy intonation a knowledge for writing the Qurans and copying it for the Muslims in all regions, to which the Islamic religious was extended. (Art 2000)

### 5. Arabic Calligraphy

Calligraphy is a part of Islamic culture that has an ancient history. Arabic calligraphy that is a silent thought and a very powerful sign has a lot of differences in its design. And the designs of writing in various languages are using Arabic letters. Arabic calligraphy is characterized by being connected, that make it attainable different geometric shapes through the tide and reverberation, rotation and elevation, interlock and overlap, and installation. Arabic calligraphy relies aesthetically on requirements starting from the proportion among the line, the point and the circle. In Arabic calligraphy of artistic performance, we use the same elements as other visual arts, such as line and mass, not only in its physical sense but also in its aesthetic meaning. (سعید 1988)

Arabic calligraphy is a fascinating art form giving rise to expressions that combine spiritual meaning with aesthetic beauty. Calligraphic expression is a fundamental decorative element of all forms of Islamic art, ranging from Architecture to ornamental design, and has been widely used throughout historical and modern times (Massoudy, 1981). Numerous styles of script have been developed over time each with a variety of expressions and yielding different compositions. (الأوسي 2008) These include several Kufic and Cursive Styles Figure (1)



Figure 1. Illustrating Cursive and Kufic styles of Arabic calligraphy (Sakkal, 1993)

Arabic calligraphy integrates a cultural language with the language of geometry. The fluidity of Arabic script offers indefinite possibilities for designing calligraphic expressions, even within a single word, since letters can be stretched and transformed in numerous ways to create different motifs.

Calligraphic compositions have either true symmetry as a result of applying isometric transformations to a motif, or an implied symmetry resulting from fitting an expression within a symmetrical organization (Figure 2). Symmetric calligraphic expressions possess either rotational symmetry with 3, 4, 5, 6 and 8-centers of rotation, or bilateral symmetry

about a vertical reflection axis. The former is the more common, mainly to preserve handedness and consequent readability; nonetheless, expressions with simple reflectional symmetry yield interesting compositions that are also recognizable (Figure 3). (BERER, ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY DESIGN 2014)

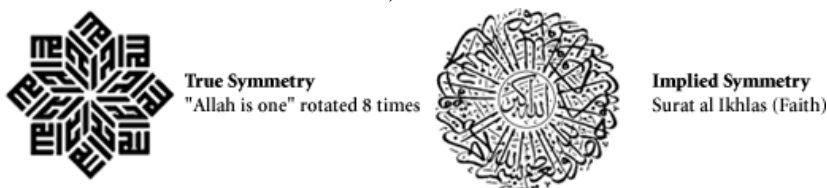


Figure 2. Calligraphic compositions have true or implied symmetry

Calligraphic expression is a form of creative design. The composition of such expressions is a non-deterministic iterative process that involves drawing and redrawing to develop, adjust and fine-tune. A calligraphic composition is composed of elements (letters) and relations (relative arrangement of the letters) defining an overall organization. During the compositional process, in each successive iteration, letters and their relative arrangements are updated, and the organization redefined. (BERER, JOSH BERER, squarespace 2018)

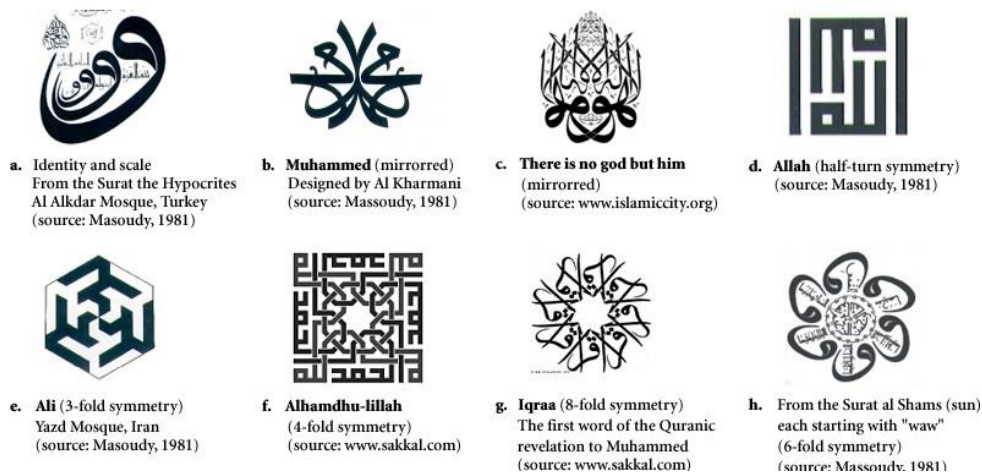


Figure 3. Examples of Arabic calligraphic compositions

### 5. Contemporary Calligraphy

In ancient times, the importance of calligraphy laid essentially on preserving the word of God and scripting Qu’ranic verses. Today the contemporary calligraphic art form has evolved and developed in different directions. A shift has happened in the new contemporary Arabic calligraphy as professor Sheila Blair describes in her book *Islamic Calligraphy*. “Arabic script has been treated in different directions, that are demonstrated in three major channels: the traditional calligraphy, Arabic script in printing, typography and computer graphics, and the modern calligraphy art that incorporates the traditional style and moving to new forms and media that can shift to abstract pseudo-calligraphy”. In this paper, the emphasis will be placed on the new interpretation of Arabic calligraphy, by current artists creating a new trend in abstracting the Arabic letter and script. They have stretched the aesthetic boundaries of calligraphy by inviting new opportunities for self-expression. The practice of integrating beautiful writing into their arts reveals an endless world of abstracted letterforms aspiring to the creation of unique compositions. (جمعة 1947)

This evolution allowed artists to revive Calligraphy without restrictive rules, while expanding new visions and progressive calligraphic artworks.

A good example would be the original work of the Lebanese master calligrapher Samir Sayegh who abstracted the letters and gave them a universal form. "He reinterpreted the Arabic letters in a very avant-garde minimalist and contemporary style, in his continuous pursuit to transcend the aesthetics of Arabic calligraphy into universal forms and signs, beyond the formal boundaries of content and meaning." At first glance, the viewer does not realize that he/she is gazing at the stylized letter "Lam Alef" as displayed in Figure 4. This composition seems to convey a modern, well-crafted artistic creation. Thus, Sayegh had successfully interpreted the calligraphic letter into an intense and complete experience, stressing on the aesthetic devoid of the meaning. (الألفي 1968) (Figure 4



Figure 4. Lam Alef

The artist's aim is to immerse the viewer in the beauty of calligraphy while forgetting the meaning and its conventional functionality. He praises primarily the beauty of calligraphy and not its reading. He transcends the Arabic letter "to its highest spheres as an art to read what cannot be read, and hear what cannot be heard and see what cannot be seen." In his interview with the Saleh Barakat owner of Agial Gallery, Samir Sayegh describes the letter "Alef" as a dancing form that can mutate in many forms. The anatomy of this simple letter renders a humble straight line which can go astray with the help of imagination and transforms into a rainfall, a razor-sharp word... He describes the flexibility of the letterform and its infinite playful shapes it can perform. Through the understanding of the anatomy of the alphabets, artists can communicate their message in a sophisticated and mature language. (Art 2000)

Other artists such as Chaouki Chamoun incorporated calligraphy into his paintings creating a pattern that evokes mysticism. In 1991, he started experimenting with words on paper to search for a new aesthetic alphabet. In 2009, he completed his series of calligraphic painting which was part of a touring exhibition titled "Written Images". In this work, he liberated himself of all boundaries related to the laws of writing, and delved into a personal expression of visual language. "In the Beginning was the Search for the Word represents the chaotic bewilderment in the moment before one finds verbal expression for some new emotion."<sup>8</sup> The artwork displays three concentric circles inside each other referring to an eye. This entire canvas is crammed with haphazard words that are indecipherable, the viewer yet interprets the conceptual message behind it. This repeated message translates to a mantra that recurs over and over mirroring the idea of the eternal search. (Ghani 2016)

In his art, Chamoun intentionally used abstracted handwritten calligraphy that appears like scribbles suggesting a personal journey of spirituality and mysticism. (Figure 5)



**Figure 5. In the Beginning was the Search for Word**

The Persian artist, Parviz Tanavoli, famous for his sculptural representation of the letter “Heech” meaning in Persian “nothing”, used the letter solely to reflect a multifaceted philosophical concept of the meaning of nothingness. He states that he “gave calligraphy up and only used one word”. He moved away from the Islamic connotation of Islamic calligraphy and explored a self-expression in three-dimensional calligraphic form. The “Heech” suggested a mystical condition beyond the nothingness. However, Tanavoli was mainly fascinated by the calligraphic shape of the letter due to its resemblance to the human body. In his book *Jewelery*, the artist affirms that if the resemblance between the “Heech” and the human body did not exist, he would have never involved himself in making it...” (Publishing 2011)

“Heech” has been integrated into the anatomy of his sculptural letter many times each time with a new concept presented in different scales. The artist explored large sculptural monumental scale of the “Heech” as well as a tiny scale that could be worn on a ring, a bracelet or a pendant. He expressed political views through his work, as seen in his sculpture “*Heech in a Cage*” where he articulates the conditions of the American-held prisoners at Guantanamo Bay detainment camp. (Figure 6) The Calligraphic letter became his mean of expression. (Alhajri 2019)



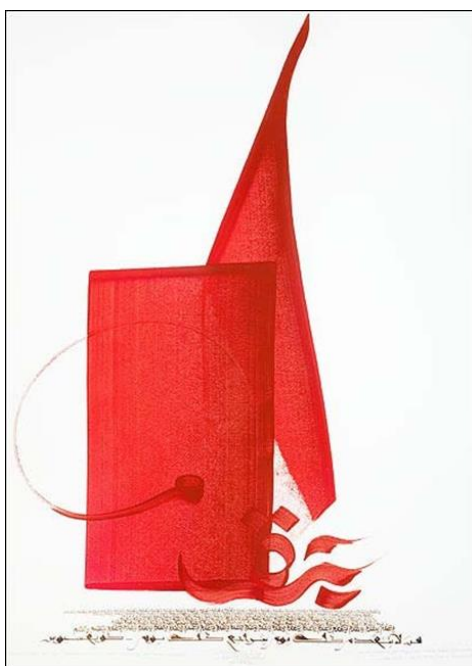


**Figure 6. Heech in a cage.**

Moreover, the Iraqi master calligrapher Hassan Massoudy uses words and phrases in the work. His inspiration is driven from proverbs, poets and philosophers throughout the centuries, ranging from St. Augustine, Virgil and Ibn'-al-Arabi to Baudelaire and Rousseau. Massoudy modernized the traditional Arabic calligraphy giving it a fresh outlook. He is known for the generous letter based sweeping forms that are central to his composition. His signature technique is to highlight the prominent word from a poem or a quote, (الألفي 1968)

accompanied by smaller scripture of the saying placed at the bottom of the composition, "like a thin lace attached to the world". (Figure 7)

His calligraphy provokes emotions that are transmitted through the dynamic movement of his strokes, the lines, the transparency of the ink flow and the proportions and balance between the large-scaled calligraphy and the smaller scaled quote. (سعيد 1988)



**Figure 7. "He who doesn't progress each day regresses each day" – Confucius.**

## 6. Calligraphy in Typographic Design

*Calligraphy* which can be defined as nice writing arts with a pencil, brush or special equipment on paper or similar materials by arranging the spaces between the letters according to significant aesthetic and design rules is an important part of visual arts. Calligraphy carries aesthetical values on itself peculiar to different geography, language and cultures with China writing in Far East cultures, Arabic writing in Middle-east in Islamic cultures and Latin in Western culture (Figure 8). (Neshat 2002)



**Fig. 8: Images related to calligraphic arrangements of different cultures**

Development phase of calligraphy is directly related to the evolution of writing on which it has been grounded. In this context, calligraphy is visual interpretation style which the artist presents with aesthetic concerns by developing from writing. While the writing carries a beneficial aim by emerging from needs, aesthetic value concern of calligraphy and, carrying stylistic and symbolic meanings made it familiar with other arts branches. When the starting point is writing, although the development phase can be perceived the same, it caused some changes in the process of development on the aims of emergence of writing and calligraphy. In addition to this, the rules of them are generally the same. While writing is a second system, which determines the system called as language with significant signs, that people use to communicate with each other; aesthetic values in calligraphy gain an artistic structure for it. According to Emin Yarar, “the relationship of calligraphy with arts has brought it to an effective arts position as it has been in China in which it does not fall behind drawing arts. This effect is a feature which can be seen in pictographic or iconographic writing in Old Egypt and Pre- Columbian- America, ideographic or synthesizer writing in China and Japanese or alphabetical writing in Cufi, Carolingian, Gothic’s and Renaissance.” Arabic calligraphy and Far East calligraphy is the field that western painters have applied searching for discrepancy in modern arts trends in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Western artists have realized that Arabic calligraphy has been a rare source in the formation of abstract shapes of flexible movements and aesthetic structure of Arabic calligraphy, oriented to symbolization with geometrical structures in Far East calligraphy. (Uddin 2013)

It is possible to separate calligraphy as East and West calligraphy if we take processes and cultural differences that writing has lived during having a calligraphic formation. Roma forms, rustic and cursive writings, usage of gothic writing characters and together with hand writings since the invention of printing machine in the development process of west calligraphy have an important place. Calligraphic weighted and gothic writing characters have been used in printed works by reaching large mass with several printed books after

the invention of printing machine. In the calligraphic designs which have entered standstill period with the invention of printing machine, mainly decorative aimed embroidering, adornments have been oriented; the effect of calligraphy has strengthened at the beginning of 19<sup>th</sup> century in which the interest of hand arts has increased with the perceivment of writing as an art again. (جمعة 1947)

It will be appropriate to separate the east calligraphy into Far East and Middle East calligraphy. Because it is a matter of general distinction between calligraphy seen in Japan and Korean writings, Chinese writing in Far East and calligraphy shaped in Arabic writing in Middle East. Cultural and geographical distinctions bring individual structural differences in East calligraphy. Especially calligraphy changing form as *-hat, hüsn-ü hat-* and shows itself as an art with the effect of Islam in the Middle East has serious distinctions with the different artistic applications in Chinese, Japanese and Korean cultures. Different examples can be seen in Middle East calligraphy which is shaped with Arabic writing and goes beyond Islamic arts by shaping itself. *Hüsn-ü hat* has developed as a lively arts branch in which feelings and thoughts are explained by the way of lines transforming into writing in Islam countries where lively portrayal is prohibited. (الألوسي 2008)

In Japanese and Korean writings derived from Chinese writing, the biggest reason of shaping calligraphy as having masterful and aesthetic values is the domination of lively and free structure formed with brush strikes. In China “every nominee entering governmental exams should write in artistic forms on special papers with brush and black ink where calligraphy as arts had much value. By the help of these writings knowledge, character and culture of the individual could be understood”. Today in Japan; calligraphy competitions are being organized every year and participants from every age and career are computing for the exhibition of their products. Whereas the development of calligraphy in Europe has been in geometrical and intuitive style, it is generally in intuitive style in East and Far East. (Neshat 2002)

Graphics design starts with a problem and forms an effective, permanent and interesting solution production. Graphics present design, ideas, concepts, texts and visuals by taking them and undergoing from print, electronics and other processes in an impressive way in the name of easing communication process, it helps understanding and taking of message by the target audience while providing order and structure for the content. It is a visual communication in general meaning. It is formed of many fields such as graphics design, package design, environmental graphics, informative graphics, and mobile graphics. One of the most important tools to transfer the feelings and ideas in this large field is typography. Daily typographic characters have been formed at the end of a long evolution starting from hand writings. Writing instruments such as brush, reed and cutter have directly affected letter styles. In parallel with this, correct selection and usage of this equipment forming the basic of calligraphic arrangement is an important factor like ability which affects the quality of designs. “Except ready equipment, calligraphy can form new equipment according to the interest and tendency of the artist itself”.

Calligraphy can be used in many different fields such as painting, architecture, graphics design, and textile design with the contributions of developing technology. The origins of many writings we have been using in graphics design are based on hand-writing and calligraphic forms. While typography expert Femard Baudin defenses existence of

visualize and permanence at the origin of writing, it defines it as “letter is one of the cornerstones of printed texts and letter design is such an ability that the difference of one character from the other can be understood with microscopic details.” In this context, many writing characters such as Palatino, Gill Sans which are being used at our times and have been designed by important calligraphy artists in the past are the products of these talented hands. (Uddin 2013)

Baudin defines typography as “technology transferring by increasing the heritage of calligraphy” The effect of typographic weighted design products by means of simplicity, aesthetics, and intensity according to the ones including visual images is undiscussable. Today, calligraphic arrangements designed by hand, processing them in computer or/and usage of these with writing characters takes too much attention. Calligraphy combined with computer technology can be basis for the designs with effective visualize. In many graphics design products, design with preferred writing characters in calligraphic form, dynamic and lively structure, not the mechanic ones, of writing puts forward typography in an effective way. (BERER, JOSH BERER, squarespace 2018)

Calligraphy which is qualified as “old fashion” and generally accepted as not agreeable style with the new design styles, takes the attention of western world active usage of Arabic calligraphy in many contemporary typographic arrangements by the Iranian designers. Nowadays as the technology surrounds all around us, human beings who miss arts/design products created or designed by hand are oriented to use two of these environments together. Usage of calligraphy in writing characters designed with brush effect which is the main equipment of Far East calligraphy, typographic posters, package designs, logo designs, digital designs and many other graphical products are the result of this situation. (Figure 9). (BERER, ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY DESIGN 2014)



Figure 9: The views of usage of calligraphy in graphical design products

## 7. Research framework

In this paper I work primarily in the Arabic script, but also occasionally I do work in other Saudi heritage elements as well. I did a lot of work with different process and materials include printmaking with a few techniques, painting on canvas and silk, ceramic, weaving, metal forming (Astana), animation, mosaic and graphic design. On the other hand, I was a professional in some of the areas that previously mentioned. I have been concentrating on computer skill more than others because this smart tool of technology has given the best insight into what path I want to be in the future. In my artwork, I draw a lot of sketches that pop up to my mind because I use art as therapy of my bad mood or stress. Then, I pick the most artistic form and feel free to scan it to direct it to Photoshop or Illustrator. At the beginning, it was not with the small sketch as always, but I have done a few silkscreen printmaking's that inspired me to combine



the touch of that vibrant color of Acrylic with computer edit. Practice more silk screen background in a just color splash Figure (10). (Art 2000)

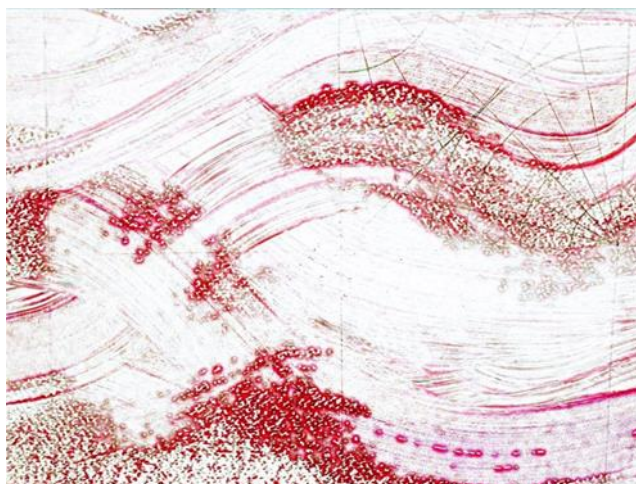


Figure (10) Splash- brush with Acrylic 24\*36

My handwriting was a part of that computer art pieces by borrowing Zain bin Bayyah poem. I have used an original famous quote in social media that has been written by him. It says "God will open a door that you thought from the intensity of despair that it was not created with a key." I call all these four pieces (Hope) and no need to explain the reason for naming them. (Alhajri 2019)

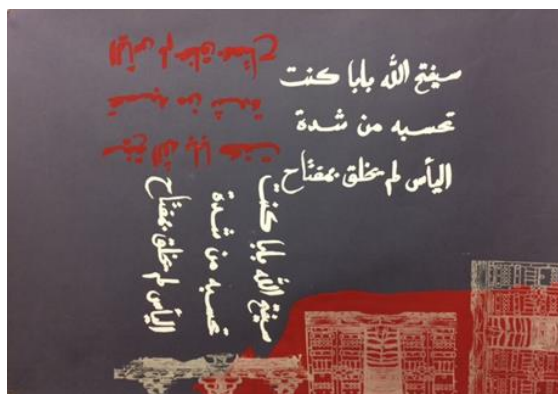


Figure (11) Hopel1- Silkscreen 24\*36 inch

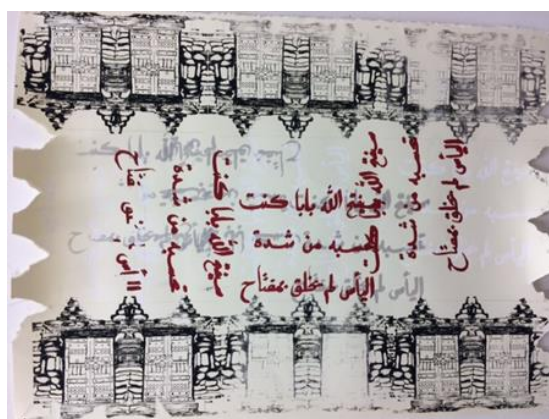


Figure (12) Hope2- Silkscreen 24\*36 inch

By the time, I pushed myself further and learned more, looking for the new idea that will make an addition to my artwork. Moreover, I have taken the previous artwork and did a lot of developments and a new process by the computer that has included an Arabic calligraphy repetition. One of my goals to do this series is to keep some of our heritage building that do not exist anymore. I believe this is a function of art through the ages. Eventually, I was trying to encourage to think openly and have confidence in opinions. Since most questions regarding a piece of art do not have an accurate answer, I would like to be able to come up with my own explanation to questions. This combination of lines and details are very harmonious because Arabic calligraphy has emphasized the curves and angles in particular rules that I have override and just focusing on the unity of design. (Ghani 2016)



Figure (13) Hope- PHOTOSHOP- Inkjet- 24\*36

Later I have started to create by using computer individually; I noticed that the value of brush painting has given a precious worth. I returned to paint on paper and canvas to have that satisfaction of my artwork. New series of artwork has inspired by Rumi story and the performing of Sufi whirling. I have started Darvish series after I read a novel of Rumi titled "The Forty Rules of Love," written by Elif Shafak. So, I have chosen to work with the characters, the position of dancing, and add an organic arabesque of Islamic art because I see a lot of beauty among these details which always represent my personality in the artwork. It is endless with computer editing, but that does not prevent a handiwork. Being an artist is not supposed to be under specific rules to follow. It just follows what inspire me to reach my ideas that I want to share with other people. (Art 2000)



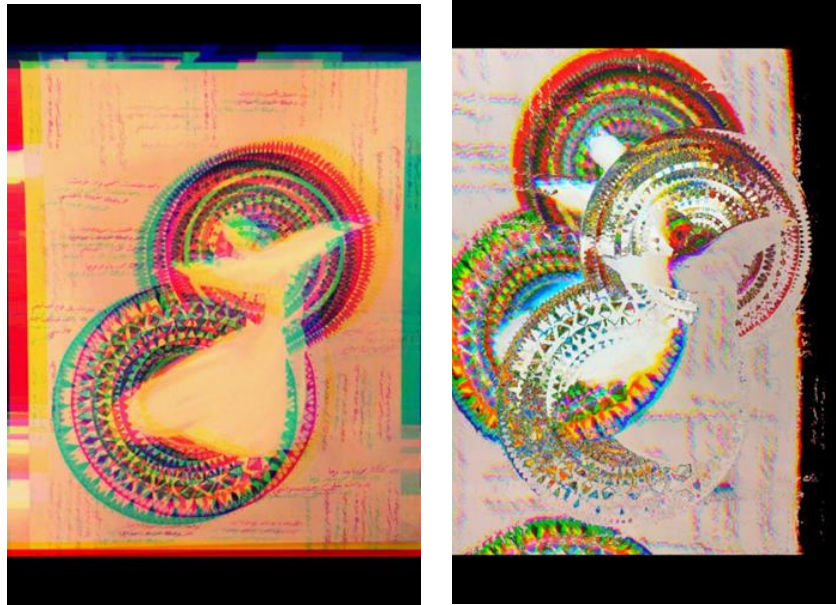


Figure (14) Darvish- PHOTOSHOP 24\*36 inkjet printing

My artwork does not incline in Arabic calligraphy, but I had abstracted which is non-figurative art and analysis some traditional geometric shape. The idea was to keep the primary references of shapes besides the characters of Arabic calligraphy. I was wondering how to make untraditional installation of art by cropping some parts and using the wall as part of art display. Being an artist is a lifestyle as well as a profession, this suits me fine as my ambition is to become a professional artist and to make a reasonable living from it. A formal academic qualification will provide me with a springboard into the world of contemporary practice. I know that any skills I acquire on a degree course will be actually transferable and will make me eminently employable in many of fields. Lately, I stop using paper sketches and creating my artwork by Photoshop and Illustrator entirely. I have focused on computer and experiment new phone apps that have new brushes of filters. For Example, Glitche, that application could be installed on iPhone or iPad and it is fantastic. It has the easy way to practice and to create GIF images. Also, I have tried to combine the process of building up the pieces of art between the programs. This way gave me a unique and different effect of the digital art. I put a layer over layer, playing with shadow and light, adding real images or brushes touch and make my unique pieces of art. I have realized that I am so fond of other programs, such as Illustrator. (Ghani 2016)

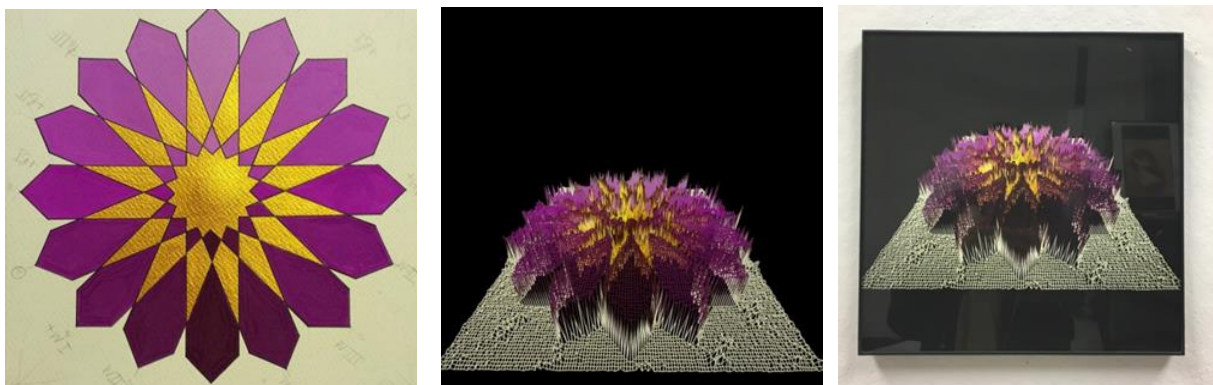
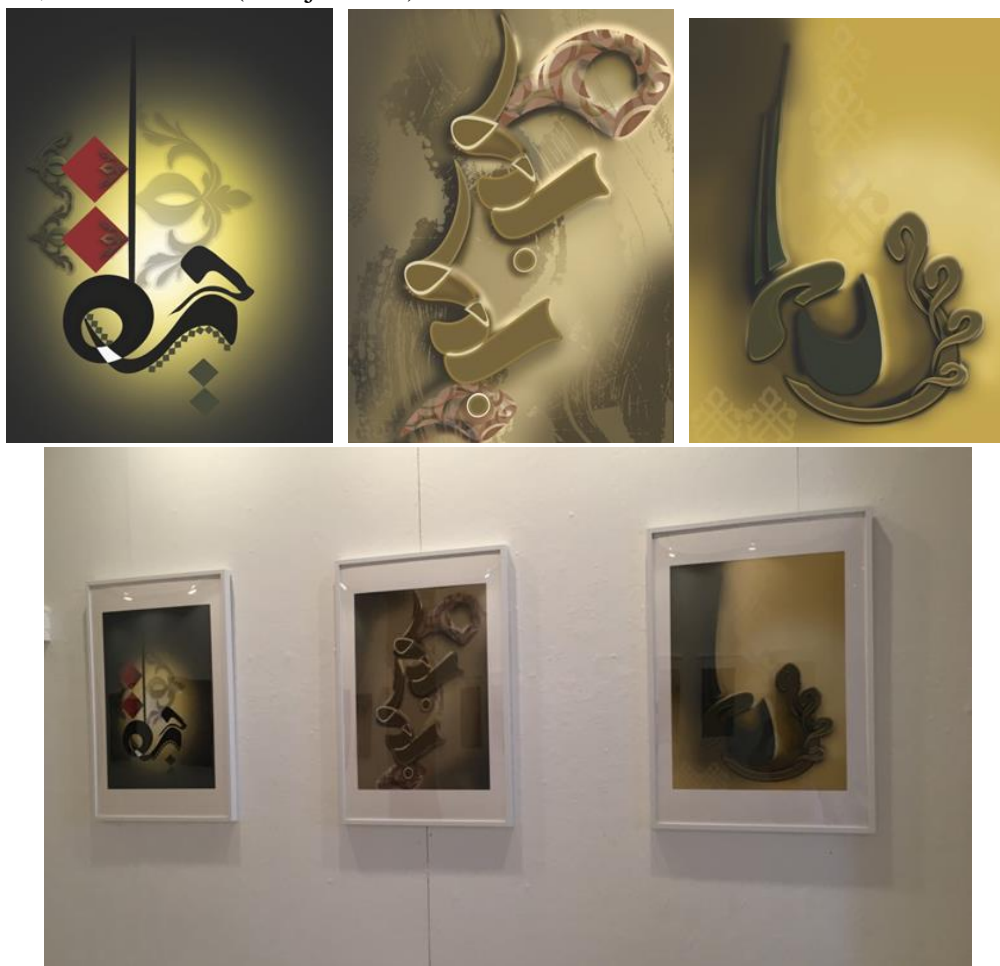


Figure (15) 3D PHOTOSHOP+GLITCHE app 30\*30 Inkjet

I have had the chance to redefine the meaning of Arabic calligraphy by making it more abstractive. I have developed my ideas and directed it to the computer. I work in a new experimenting of Illustrator process that will push me to the new stage of creating art. When I start to step this level, I realize this is going to be the clear different of my old artwork. The knowledge about computer design is keeping it developed through the time. I have learned a lot when I practice design by Photoshop and Illustrator, more process and ability to create an aesthetics of art. I created new calligraphy art that has new meaning and inspiration that come from inside. Working on this final project through my MFA degree allowed me to put all my energy to create artwork in a professional way. Overall, I got satisfaction about what I have learned and did to precede the future image and plan. My first step after the graduation is to teach what I have learned through these years. Continuing to study PDH in fine art is the major goal after graduation, but I will spread the meaning of art that comes from the western side. The art that gets out from the box. The art is abnormal, unusual, spiritual, unique, variable, productive, and fantastic. (Alhajri 2019)



**Figure (16) Untitled A,B,C Illustrator 24\*36  
Displaying at STEINBERG MUSEUM**

As an artist who is looking for creating art for lifestyle purposes, such as interior decoration, advertisement, and all other posters, I did some experiments of books cover, wall decoration, and other. I took the same design and starting to find the more creative purpose of displaying it. I chose the Vinyl and I printed on it.



I believe that calligraphy, or any craft really, is akin to life document: though we move closer and closer to mastery and perfection, we will never actually arrive, and in fact can never arrive, as there is always infinitely more to learn. (Neshat 2002)

No matter how skilled we become, how technically adept we are, it is inexcusable to claim that further efforts are unneeded, or that you have reached the pinnacle of your craft. I believe that if you find yourself saying 'that's good enough' then it is not. (Alhajri 2019)



Figure (17) Salam, Illustrator, 50\*38-inch Vinyl printing. Displaying at SIA

## 8. Art and Movement:

The Artistic influences that made artist an artist not limited by their childhood but inspired by life experiment and a history of technique development as well as art movement. Through the years of researching and creating art, I found myself inclined to the basic colors mostly and trying to confirm the outline beside an Arabic script that comes in both geometric and organic shapes. Per Abstract art movement that uses a visual language of shape, form, color and line to create a composition which may exist with a degree of independence from visual references in the world. This movement influences my artwork as well, by some non-figurative art, non-objective art, and nonrepresentational art. (الألفي 1968)

For a specific artist who inspired me although he does not relate to Abstract Art but his art is a sketch guide for Arabic calligraphy. Piet Mondrian who was a contributor to the De Stijl art movement and group, which was founded by Theo Van Doesburg. His artwork that called Composition II in Red, Blue, and Yellow, 1930 inspired me to simulate that piece. (الألوسي 2008)



Figure (18) Salam, Illustrator 24\*36 Jet ink printing, Displaying at SIA

This paper has introduced what is an Arabic calligraphy, a brief history of calligraphy, the development of my artwork techniques, and important calligrapher who inspired me and others. Some of these calligraphers might be unknown in eastern regions, but they are contemporary artists who left fingerprint in Art.

#### ❖ **Constructivism**

Constructivism is an art movement that focuses on an artistic and architectural philosophy Founded in Russia by Vladimir Tatlin in 1913. He wanted to formulate art. The movement was supported art as a practice for community purposes. In the 20th century, Constructivism left an incredible effect on modern art movements that influencing trends such as the Bauhaus and De Stijl movements. Its influence was pervasive, with major effects on architecture, graphic design, industrial design, theater, film, dance, fashion and to some extent music. (سعيد 1988)

The concept of Constructivism movement has influencing my artwork through Pure Geometric Abstraction and the De Stijl Visual Language. Also, consisting of forms made up of straight lines and basic geometric shapes. (جمعة 1947)

#### ❖ **De Stijl movements**

De Stijl Dutch was a Dutch artistic movement founded in 1917 in Amsterdam. Proponents of De Stijl support abstraction by a reduction to the essentials of form and color and simplified visual compositions to vertical and horizontal, using only black, white and primary colors. The De Stijl consisted of artists and architects.

The most significant group's principal members were the painters Piet Mondrian (1872–1944). About a brief history of that movement that was a reference for one of my thesis art about the movement that Piet Mondrian was a contributor because a guideline of writing an Arabic Calligraphy should be drawn vertical and horizontal before. So, Mondrian work inspired me to use his compositions and these primary colors in my artwork. (الألوسي 2008)

#### ❖ **Early Graphic Designer**

Max Miedinger is known as Swiss typeface designer. By the time, Miedinger became a famous by creating the Neue Haas Grotesk typeface in 1957. Later, Max became an apprentice typesetter at a book printing office for Jacques Bollmann. After a few years, he started the School of Arts and Crafts. He also worked for a typographer in advertising studio called Globe. He improved his skills. After ten years with Haas Type Foundry as a representative. Finally, he made his mark on history and designed the most used typeface of the 20th century, Helvetica. (Uddin 2013)

Through his life and jobs timeline, I am wondering how the development of the technique and presses take time? The graphic designer has a great feature that does not exist with other tradition of art making because the communication design can happen in any scale. (Ghani 2016)

### 9. Contemporary Artistes

#### ❖ **Shirin Neshat**

I was influenced by the works of Shirin Neshat, an Iranian artist who lives in New York City. I met her first time in New York City during conference titled “The Fear of Art” which was on 13 Feb. 2015. She combines the calligraphy and photography by writing on the skin of the human. This artwork of Shirin has inspired me to start with silkscreen then Photoshop. She does a similar thing by writing on body skin then photograph it. However, I have also keep searching

for calligraphy artist in other languages non-Arabic because I want to explore what are the aesthetics of other languages. (Neshat 2002)

The most influenced artist for my previous work is the elements of design because I used to abstract and modulation from the real shape. The art of abstraction and Arabesque were the primary resources of my work. For example, I see the heritage of jewelry as a treasure for me, because they carry precise details in her designs. Also, I did not use the tradition colors in my work to reach the main concept of my artwork. (Neshat 2002)

#### ❖ Josh Berer

Josh Berer who was born with a professor mother of Islamic Art History, and bookbinder father. Between them, Berer there had a huge memory image on Islamic design, calligraphy, typesetting, paper arts, and illumination. Berer moved and lived in several countries that would influence his art. First, he did his freshmen year abroad in Jerusalem, where he studied Hebrew and began learned Arabic. Second, he did an intensive summer Turkish course in Istanbul. Then, spent a semester abroad studying the Arabic language in Jordan. Fifth, he lived in Sana's for six months where he joined a privet comprising advanced readings in classical Arabic grammar, Islamic law, and modern literature. Moreover, in Yamen, he studied Arabic calligraphy and oral poetry. As a calligrapher, his parents influenced him between the knowledge of Islamic Art History and making illuminated manuscripts of his poetry. However, he started the calligraphy when he began to learn Arabic at the same time. So, he believes that calligraphy or other. (BERER, ARABIC CALLIGRAPHY DESIGN 2014)

#### ❖ Dr. Salman Alhajiri

He is a contemporary artist, graphic designer, and researcher who was born in 1978 in Oman. He is an assistant professor of graphic design at the department of art education, Sultan Qaboos University. Alhajiri is the most fruitful graphic designer now after he completes a PhD degree in Art and design at Loughborough University. In 2005, as a researcher, he interested in exploring the links between the creativity and graphic design education, and the ways of developing creative potential of graphic design students. In art and design, he is interested in creating Arabic calligraphy art, web design, and publication design. Dr. Salman Alhajiri's Artwork. On the other hand, Alhajiri participated in many international exhibitions, workshops, and artistic activities. However, the most important elements in his art are; creativity, color harmony, simplicity, and attractive compositions. (Figure .5) Presently, he performs various art and design, experiments using several approaches include: photography, painting, drawing, digital, printmaking, and graphic design. Alhajiri earned a lot of awards globally and locally and were as membership and association around the world starting with his country. (Alhajiri 2019)

### 10. Reflection:

From starting, to study art in Saudi Arabia, to move to the USA, to continue to study Fine Art, I am proud to be a participant of United States art schools, doing my master, and participate in galleries. The purpose of studying art and creating my dark thoughts to show it in public, because I feel this is the best way to express and document my ideas by some Adobe programs. Help showing the folk art that might disappear. Through my master study, I have predicted to show people how I have been able to be a contemporary artist by the time and develop my work in new paths which will be in graphic design. I had to study my master level in stimulating and

nurturing the environment that made me a more mature artist through the listening to the constructive criticism. By being in the critique classes to the seminar discussions, I feel like there is no end of developing myself and push my thinking up. My work gradually changed, it got a lot of advising and criticism from classmates, artists, and professors. I am glad about listening to them and being one of the art students at Long Island University.

The study introduced what is the meaning of calligraphy for me? a brief history of calligraphers, how they inspired me? the development of my art calligraphy's techniques through the time, and important calligrapher in Arabic region and others. These calligraphers might be unknown in eastern parts, but they agree and working in unifying rules, characters, and the process.

## 11. Results:

Through theoretical and experimental study, the researcher reached the following results:

- 1- Possibility of making use of engineering systems to build Arabic crafts as an introduction to drawing and painting.
- 2- The engineering construction of the Arabic letters, from the entrances that motivate the artist towards producing new ideas of one letter, and to formulate an innovative link in the field of drawing and painting.
- 3- Modern digital technology helps provide plastic processing treatments with high technical performance in the field of photography and drawing.
- 4- The possibility of linking and pairing between modern scientific and technical developments and the world of creativity in the field of drawing and painting.
- 5- There is a permanent relationship between discoveries and scientific theories and between the arts due to the connection of modern technologies to the various engineering and mathematical systems and laws.
- 6- The possibility of mixing modern technology represented in the computer world with its advanced programs and the world of art as an introduction to drawing and painting.

## 12. Recommendations

In light of the results of the theoretical and experimental study, the researcher recommends the following:

- 1- The construction of the Arabic letter outside the framework of written rules, the appearance of it in general, and engineering and natural applications need more research and study to benefit from it in the field of drawing and painting.
- 2- Deepening the study of the engineering systems of the Arabic letter and linking it to the field of photography.
- 3- Carrying out technical studies that are concerned with handling and studying computer programs, applying them and making use of them in the field of photography.
- 4- Interest in studying two-dimensional and three-dimensional computer programs.
- 5- The need to link art, science and innovative technology to uncover new approaches to creativity.
- 6- Direction to various aspects of science and benefit from them in the field of photography.
- 7- Take advantage of modern technology and techniques in the field of drawing and painting.

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