

**The Living Art
of Islamic Calligraphy**

Sunday, October 28, 2007, 2:00 p.m.



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Brown Auditorium Theater
The Caroline Wiess Law
Building
The Museum of Fine Arts,
Houston
1001 Bissonnet
713-639-7300
lectures@mfah.org
www.mfah.org

Admission is open to the
public and free for museum
members and members
of cosponsor organizations.

A reception and
demonstration follow
the program.

Front: Attributed to Mir Damad,
*Calligraphy exercise (siyah
mashq) in nasta'liq script
comprising a couplet of poetry
from the preface to the Gulistan
("Rosegarden") by Sa'di,*
1800s–1900s, ink, opaque
pigment, and gold on paper,
Harvard University Art Museums,
gift of John Goelet, 1958.196.

Above: Mohamed Zakariya,
Indigo, 2006, soot ink, gouache,
and three alloys of gold on ahar
paper; borders of marbled
paper, courtesy of the artist.
© Mohamed Zakariya

Artist Talk and Demonstration **The Living Art of Islamic Calligraphy**



Based in Arlington, Virginia, Mohamed Zakariya is the most accomplished Islamic calligrapher in the United States, and the only American to receive certification from master Turkish calligraphers. “Proper calligraphy is supposed to expand your heart to the meaning of a text,” says Zakariya.

“In the 45 years I have been developing my approach, I have worked through the art from its very origins, through its many technologies and its varied regional, epochal, and cultural strains. The great challenge is to present the great truths in a way that, while remaining loyal to the traditions of the past, is new and fresh and vital. In this way, the ancient texts can speak for themselves, revealing their meanings spontaneously to the viewer—sometimes gently, sometimes grandly.”

In this special Houston appearance, Zakariya talks about the history and practice of Islamic calligraphy, and will demonstrate his exquisite style during the reception. This program is presented in conjunction with the opening of the exhibition *Traces of the Calligrapher and Writing the Word of God: Calligraphy and the Qur'an*.

This program is generously cosponsored by His Highness Prince Aga Khan Shia Imami Ismaili Council for the Southwestern United States and the Asia Society Texas Center.

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