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THIS ACTIVITY BOOK IS DESIGNED AS A COMPANION PIECE FOR THE LAAL EXHIBITION AT:

ART GALLERY OF MISSISSAUGA
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MORE INFORMATION ON THE ZAHOR UL AKHLAQ AND THE LAAL EXHIBITION CAN BE FOUND AT:

WWW.LAAL.INFO


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THE ONTARIO
TRILLIUM
FOUNDATION



WHY DO PEOPLE BECOME ARTISTS? YOU KNOW: PAINTERS, MUSICIANS, WRITERS, POETS—STUFF LIKE THAT?

NOBODY REALLY KNOWS FOR SURE. WHAT WE DO KNOW, IS THAT EVERYDAY—IN EVERY PART OF THE WORLD, SOMEONE IS BORN AND FOR REASONS UNKNOWN TO THEMSELVES—OR ANYONE ELSE, THEY ARE DESTINED TO LEAD A CREATIVE LIFE AS AN ARTIST.

OFTEN, THESE FUTURE ARTISTS SEEM A LITTLE DIFFERENT FROM THE OTHER KIDS. SOMETIMES THEY'LL LOOK LIKE THEY'VE DRIFTED OFF SOMEWHERE ELSE, OR THEY'LL JUST DISAPPEAR WHEN YOU LEAST EXPECT IT. EVERY ONCE IN WHILE THEY'LL SAY SOMETHING THAT SURPRISES OR SHOCKS YOU—OR MAKES YOU LOOK AT THE WORLD IN A DIFFERENT WAY. IF THEY GET INTERESTED IN SOMETHING, THEY'LL GET TOTALLY INVOLVED WITH IT. WHEN THEY FIGURE IT OUT, THEY'LL MOVE ON TO SOMETHING ELSE. YOU CAN NEVER GUESS WHAT THEY ARE GOING TO DO NEXT.

WE ALL DO THIS SOMETIMES AND THAT IS BECAUSE, TRUTH BE TOLD, THERE IS AN ARTIST IN ALL OF US!

THOSE WHO CONTINUE ON TO BE GREAT ARTISTS WILL BE RECOGNIZED BY WHAT THEY PAINT, OR WHAT THEY SCULPT, HOW THEY SING, WHAT THEY WRITE, BY THE MUSIC THEY MAKE, OR THE BUILDINGS THEY DESIGN. IF THE REST OF US SPEND TIME WITH THE ARTWORK CREATED BY THESE ARTISTS, IT WILL MOVE, EXCITE, AND INSPIRE THE ARTIST THAT EXISTS IN ALL OF US.

ZAHOOR WAS BORN IN DELHI, INDIA IN 1941. WHEN HE WAS SIX YEARS OLD, DURING A DRAMATIC AND DIFFICULT TIME CALLED PARTITION, HE AND HIS FAMILY HAD TO MOVE TO A CITY CALLED KARACHI.

WHILE HE WAS GROWING UP IN KARACHI, ZAHOOR LOVED TO SPEND TIME WATCHING A MASTER CALLIGRAPHER NAMED YOUSAF DEHLAVI. MR. DEHLAVI SPENT HIS DAYS CREATING EXQUISITE ILLUMINATED MANUSCRIPTS.

CALLIGRAPHY IS A SPECIAL FORM OF WRITING. IN ZAHOOR'S PART OF THE WORLD, THE ALPHABET THEY USE IS CALLED AN ARABIC SCRIPT. THOSE CALLIGRAPHIC ARTISTS WHO COULD WRITE THIS SCRIPT BEAUTIFULLY AND CREATIVELY WERE HIGHLY VALUED.

IT WAS LIKE MAGIC WATCHING THESE INCREDIBLE ARABIC CHARACTERS FLOWING FROM A HAND-CUT REED PEN ONTO THE PAGE. ZAHOOR WAS SO AMAZED THAT HE WANTED TO BE ABLE TO DO THIS AS WELL. HE WOULD PRACTICE THESE STROKES ON HIS REUSABLE WOODEN WRITING TABLET, THE TAKHTI, OVER AND OVER AGAIN.



CHECK THIS OUT, BELOW IS THE FULL ARABIC ALPHABET. IT ACTUALLY READS RIGHT TO LEFT. BOOKS WRITTEN IN ARABIC START AT WHAT WE NORMALLY THINK IS THE BACK OF THE BOOK!

خ Xaa'	ح H'aa'	ج Jiim	ث Thaa'	ت Taa'	ب Baa'	أ 'Alif
ص Slaad	ش Shiin	س Siin	ز Zaay	ر Raa'	ذ (Th)aal	د Daal
ق Qaaf	ف Faa'	غ Ghayn	ع 'Ayn	ظ (Th)laa'	ط Taa'	ض Dlaad
ي Yaa'	و Waaw	ه Haa'	ن Nuun	م Miim	ل Laam	ك Kaaf

TRY THIS WITH YOUR PARENT OR TEACHER

LOOK AT THE CHARACTERS AND SEE IF YOU CAN FIND THE SOUNDS THAT MAKE UP YOUR NAME. ON A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER, TRY AND DRAW THEM. REMEMBER THAT YOU HAVE TO PUT THEM ON THE PAGE FROM RIGHT TO LEFT. ARABIC DOESN'T HAVE THE SAME SOUNDS THAT ENGLISH HAS, SO SOME NAMES MAY NOT WORK. IF YOU CAN'T FIND ALL THE CHARACTERS THAT MAKE UP YOUR NAME, SEE IF ANOTHER NAME WILL WORK. DRAW IT AND SEE IF YOUR FRIENDS CAN FIGURE OUT WHAT THE NAME IS.

YOU CAN EVEN GO ONLINE TO HEAR HOW THE CHARACTERS SOUND:

WWW.CAFE-SYRIA.COM/ALPHABET.HTM

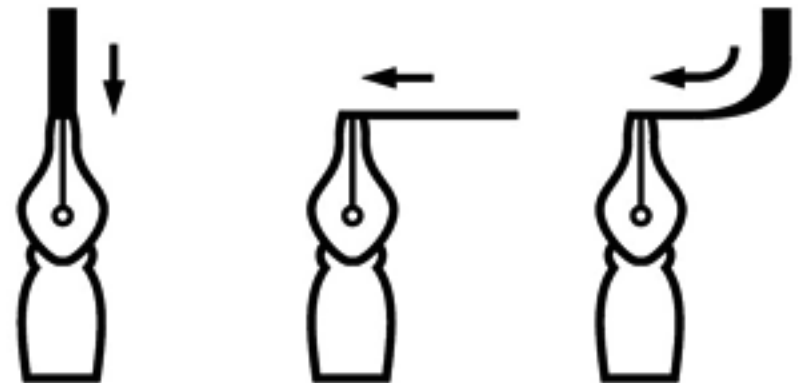
DRAWING TIPS

IN ORDER TO DRAW THIS CALLIGRAPHY, YOU'LL NEED A SPECIAL PEN. ONE WITH A FLAT EDGE-SOMETHING LIKE THIS:



YOU CAN PICK UP ONE OF THESE PENS, OR A SIMILAR CALLIGRAPHY MARKER, AT AN ART SUPPLY STORE.

YOU'LL HAVE TO EXPERIMENT SO THAT YOU MAKE THE THIN PART OF THE STROKE WITH THE THIN SIDE OF THE PEN AND THEN MOVE THE PEN, JUST RIGHT, TO GET THE THICK PART OF THE CHARACTER. THIS IS NOT EASY TO DO. YOU'LL QUICKLY FIND OUT WHY ZAHOR HAD TO PRACTICE SO MUCH!



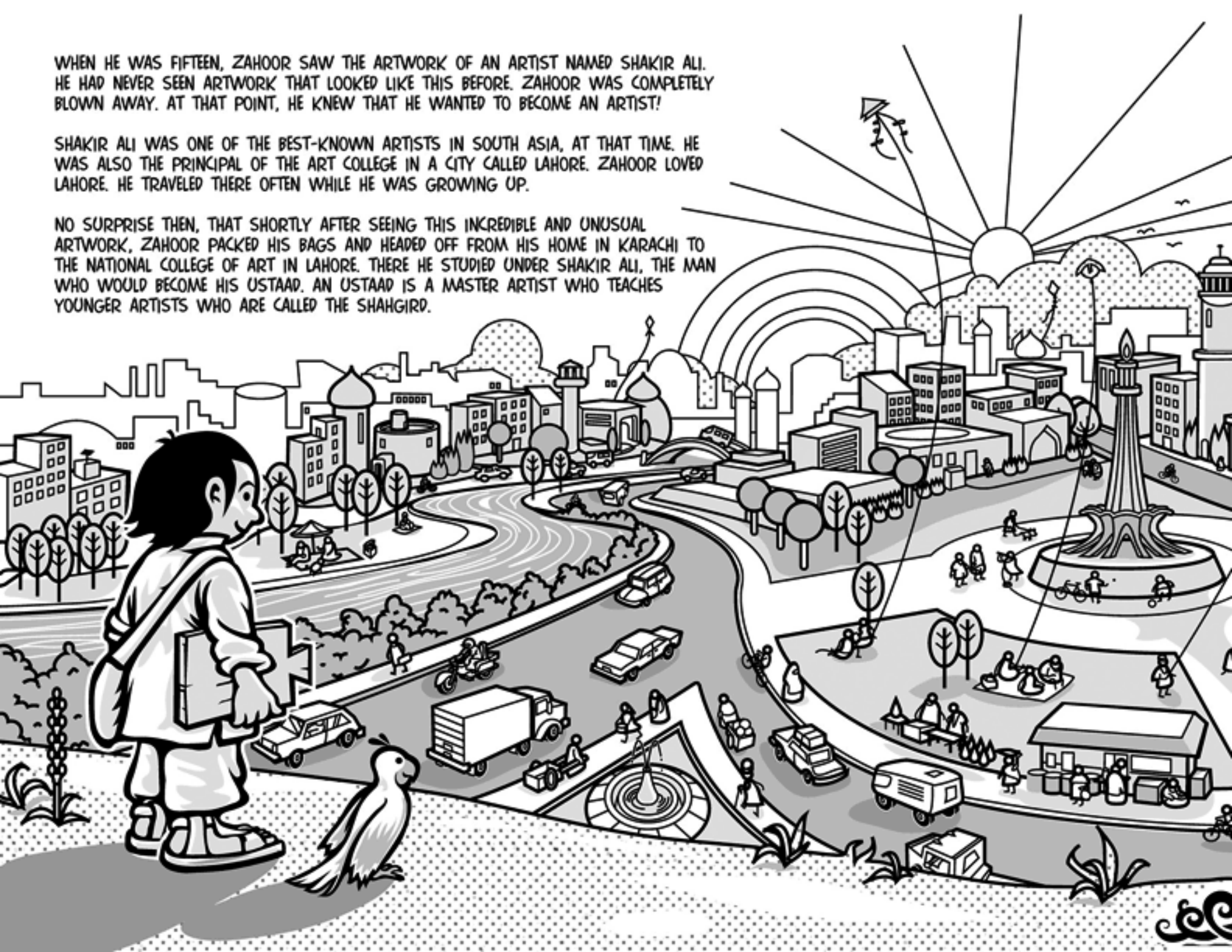
CALLIGRAPHY GALORE!

DID YOU KNOW THAT JUST ABOUT EVERY COUNTRY IN THE WORLD HAS ITS OWN SPECIAL KIND OF CALLIGRAPHY? TRY GOOGLING ANOTHER COUNTRY TO SEE WHAT THEIR CALLIGRAPHY LOOKS LIKE. THERE ARE MANY BOOKS AT THE LIBRARY ON CALLIGRAPHY AS WELL. CHECK OUT JAPANESE CALLIGRAPHY, OR CHINESE CALLIGRAPHY. SEE IF YOU CAN FIGURE OUT HOW TO WRITE YOUR NAME WITH THIS NEW CALLIGRAPHY!

WHEN HE WAS FIFTEEN, ZAHOOR SAW THE ARTWORK OF AN ARTIST NAMED SHAKIR ALI. HE HAD NEVER SEEN ARTWORK THAT LOOKED LIKE THIS BEFORE. ZAHOOR WAS COMPLETELY BLOWN AWAY. AT THAT POINT, HE KNEW THAT HE WANTED TO BECOME AN ARTIST!

SHAKIR ALI WAS ONE OF THE BEST-KNOWN ARTISTS IN SOUTH ASIA, AT THAT TIME. HE WAS ALSO THE PRINCIPAL OF THE ART COLLEGE IN A CITY CALLED LAHORE. ZAHOOR LOVED LAHORE. HE TRAVELED THERE OFTEN WHILE HE WAS GROWING UP.

NO SURPRISE THEN, THAT SHORTLY AFTER SEEING THIS INCREDIBLE AND UNUSUAL ARTWORK, ZAHOOR PACKED HIS BAGS AND HEADED OFF FROM HIS HOME IN KARACHI TO THE NATIONAL COLLEGE OF ART IN LAHORE. THERE HE STUDIED UNDER SHAKIR ALI, THE MAN WHO WOULD BECOME HIS USTAAD. AN USTAAD IS A MASTER ARTIST WHO TEACHES YOUNGER ARTISTS WHO ARE CALLED THE SHAHGIRD.





KEEPING UP WITH ZAHOOR

WHAT WAS THAT PARTITION THING ALL ABOUT? GOOD QUESTION. DO SOME RESEARCH ON THE WEB OR AT THE LIBRARY AND FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED IN SOUTH ASIA IN 1947 THAT WOULD CAUSE ZAHOOR AND HIS FAMILY TO HAVE TO MOVE FROM DELHI TO KARACHI. FILL IN THE ANSWER HERE: _____

WHICH PIECES OF ZAHOOR'S ARTWORK, AT THE GALLERY, SHOW SOMETHING OF HIS INTEREST IN CALLIGRAPHY? _____

WHAT KIND OF PAINTING DID SHAKIR ALI DO? AGAIN, SOME RESEARCH IS REQUIRED HERE. _____

WHY DO YOU THINK THAT ZAHOOR LIKED SHAKIR ALI'S ARTWORK? _____

DO WE HAVE ANYTHING SIMILAR TO THE USTAAD SHAHGIRD (MASTER/ APPRENTICE) TRADITION IN CANADA? IF SO, CAN YOU NAME SOME PROFESSIONS THAT HAVE THIS SYSTEM? _____

THIS TAKHTI IS FROM WHERE? AND IT IS MADE WITH WHAT???

ACTUALLY, YOU TELL US! FIND THESE TAKHTIS AT THE SHOW AND WRITE DOWN WHO THE ARTIST IS, AND WHERE THE ARTIST IS FROM. ALSO WRITE THE MATERIALS (MEDIA) THAT WERE USED IN MAKING THE TAKHTI.



ARTIST'S NAME →
 ARTIST'S COUNTRY →
 MATERIALS USED →

_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

FAVOURITES! *

WHAT IS THE NAME OF THE ARTIST WHO MADE YOUR FAVOURITE TAKHTI AT THE SHOW? _____

WHERE IS HE OR SHE FROM? _____

WHAT IS THE TAKHTI MADE OF? _____

WHAT COLOURS ARE USED? _____

WERE THE COLOURS PRIMARY OR SECONDARY? _____

WAS THE ARTIST TELLING A STORY WITH THE TAKHTI? IF SO, WHAT DO YOU THINK IT IS? _____

WHY IS THIS TAKHTI YOUR FAVOURITE? _____



FINDING OUT MORE *

DO SOME RESEARCH INTO THE COUNTRY WHERE YOUR FAVOURITE TAKHTI CAME FROM:

WHAT COUNTRIES BORDER THIS COUNTRY? _____

HOW MANY PEOPLE LIVE THERE? _____

WHAT IS THEIR MAIN EXPORT? _____

WHAT IS UNIQUE ABOUT THIS COUNTRY? _____

CAN YOU SEE ANYTHING IN YOUR FAVOURITE TAKHTI THAT RELATES TO THE COUNTRY WHERE IT WAS MADE? IF YES, WHAT? _____

* IF YOU NEED MORE ROOM FOR YOUR ANSWERS TO THESE QUESTIONS, USE A SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER.

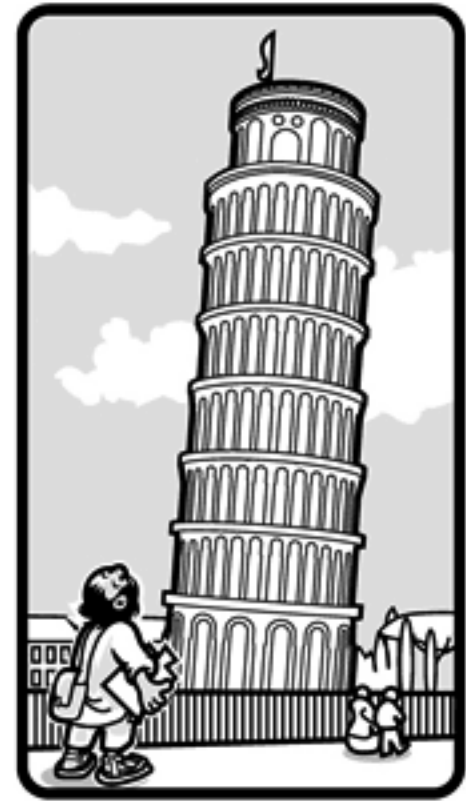
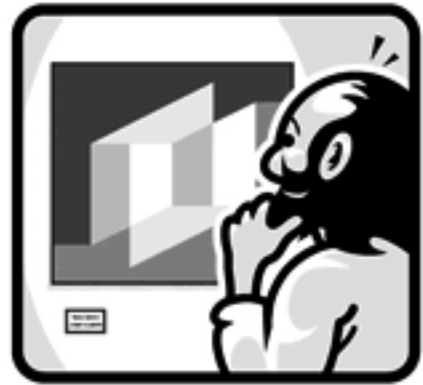




ZAHOOR LOVED TO TRAVEL. WHEN HE WAS 25, HE HEADED OFF TO LONDON, ENGLAND, WHERE HE CONTINUED TO STUDY MORE ABOUT WESTERN AND EASTERN ART. HE LIKED THE WORK OF A LOT OF WESTERN ARTISTS, PEOPLE LIKE JOSEF ALBERS. HE LOVED MARK ROTHKO'S ARTWORK. THEN AGAIN, HE WOULD SPEND COUNTLESS HOURS LOOKING AT INDIAN MINIATURE PAINTINGS IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM. HE LOVED THE MINIATURES BECAUSE THEY WERE PAINTED IN A VERY DIFFERENT STYLE THAN THAT OF WESTERN ART.

ZAHOR TRAVELED TO MANY PLACES: IRAN, AFGHANISTAN, TURKEY, THAILAND, INDONESIA, CHINA, JAPAN, GREECE, ITALY, FRANCE, LONDON, THE UNITED STATES-TO NAME A FEW. HE EVEN LIVED IN CANADA IN THE LATER PART OF HIS LIFE. WHEREVER HE WENT, HE WOULD STUDY THE ART FROM THAT COUNTRY. HE ALWAYS MADE FRIENDS WITH OTHER ARTISTS AND PEOPLE WHO LOVED ART.

HE NEVER FORGOT WHERE HE CAME FROM THOUGH, AND HE NEVER GAVE UP ON THE TAKHTI EITHER. THROUGHOUT HIS LIFE HE WOULD CONTINUE TO BUY TAKHTIS IN THE MARKETS WHERE HE LIVED, BUT LATER IN LIFE HE WOULD PAINT ON THEM INSTEAD OF WRITING ON THEM.



MOST PEOPLE DON'T REALIZE THIS, BUT SOME OF THE BEST ARTISTS DON'T DO JUST ONE THING. ZAHOOR WAS LIKE THIS. HE PAINTED, HE MADE SCULPTURE, HE BECAME A TEACHER (USTAAD), HE DESIGNED LOGOS. SOMEHOW, HE EVEN MANAGED TO GET MARRIED AND HAVE KIDS!

ZAHOOR WAS A LUCKY MAN BECAUSE HE WAS ABLE TO LIVE A CREATIVE LIFE AS AN ARTIST, AND THAT IS A GOOD THING BECAUSE HE WAS ONE OF THOSE UNIQUE PEOPLE WHO COULD NOT HELP BUT BE ANYTHING ELSE.



ARTISTS WITH RANGE

HOW MANY DIFFERENT THINGS CAN A VISUAL ARTIST DO? NAME 10.

ALBERS, ROTHKO, AND ZAHOOR

I BET YOU THOUGHT THAT WAS IT FOR THE RESEARCH? NO THERE'S MORE! WE CAN'T CLOSE THE TAKHTI ACTIVITY BOOK WITHOUT FINDING OUT WHO MARK ROTHKO AND JOSEF ALBERS ARE. DO SOME READING ON BOTH AND TRY AND FIND OUT THE FOLLOWING:

WHERE WERE THEY BORN? _____

WHERE DID THEY MOVE TO? _____

3) WHAT KIND OF ARTWORK DID THEY DO? _____

4) CAN YOU GUESS WHY ZAHOOR LIKED THEIR ARTWORK? _____

WHAT ABOUT THE INDIAN MINIATURE?

WHAT IS AN INDIAN MINIATURE PAINTING? LOOK INTO IT AND THEN SEE IF YOU CAN FIND SOME EXAMPLES, AT THE GALLERY, OF HOW THIS STYLE OF PAINTING INFLUENCED SOME OF ZAHOOR'S ARTWORK. WHICH OF ZAHOOR'S PIECES HAVE SOMETHING OF THE INDIAN MINIATURE IN THEM?

WHICH TAKHTIS HAVE SOMETHING OF THE INDIAN MINIATURE IN THEM?

USE THIS CUTOUT TAKHTI TO CREATE AN INDIAN MINIATURE THAT TELLS A STORY ABOUT YOUR LIFE. THEN, YOU AND YOUR CLASSMATES CAN HAVE YOUR OWN TAKHTI EXHIBITION AT YOUR SCHOOL!

