

Artists

Samira Abbassy
Tareq Abboushi
Sabah Ahmed
Diana Al Hadid
Javid Alibhai
Meherunnisa Asad
Fayyaz Bijli
Bushra Chaudry
Sharmeen Obaid Chinoy
Khadija Daya
Hasan Elahi
Yasmin Etemadi
Huma Gul
Sarah Husain
Masood Kamandy
Yasamin Keshtkar
Asma Arshad Mahmood
Sara Rahbar
Sa'dia Rehman
Hadieh Marjan Shafie
Tahera Seher Shah
Mo Shah
Saba Waheed
Emna Zghal

Curator

Mareena W. Daridia

Director of Visual Arts, Abrons Arts Center

Susan Fleminger

Visual Arts/Gallery Education Coordinator, Abrons Arts Center

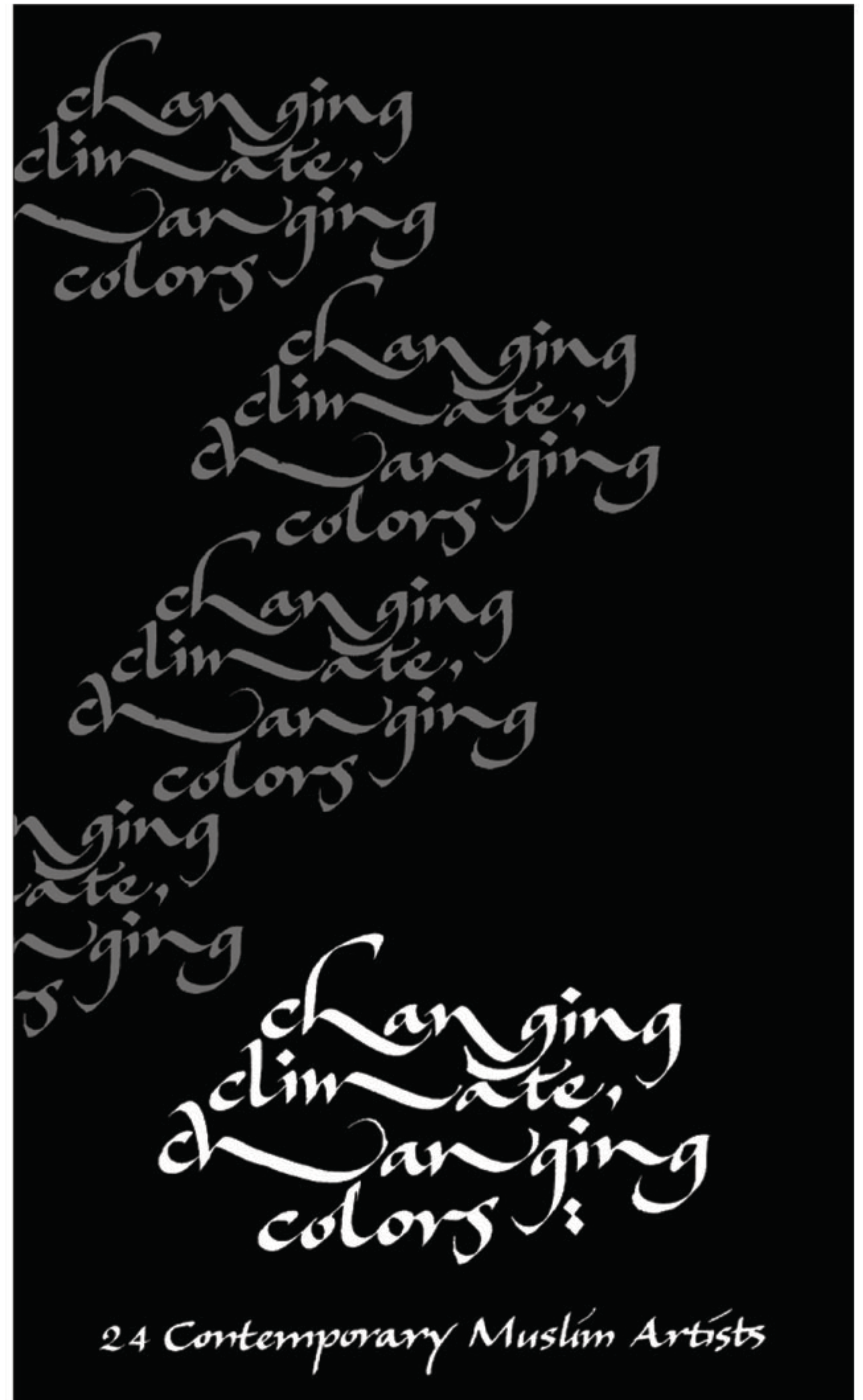
Martin Dust

Title calligraphy by Elinor Aishah Holland

Exhibits are accompanied by **Reading Art**, a gallery education program. For an appointment please call 212.598.0400, ext.202.

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Drawing awareness to the cultural and personal identity quandary of East meeting West, **Changing Climate, Changing Colors** expresses the current misgivings, doubts, fears and hopes as Islam and its context continue to evolve. The 24 Muslim artists presented come from different geographic, political, and cultural communities shedding light on the indelible differences within Islam. Some works shout in rebellion at the looming Western culture, while others whisper challenging and provoking remarks towards the traditions and institutions of Islam. Yet despite their differences, traditional characteristics of Islamic art from script and ornate patterning to repetitive symbolic imagery re-occur throughout the exhibition, simultaneously unifying the work and providing a common point of departure for the varied interpretations of an ever changing, international culture.

Many examples of work in the exhibition subtly reveal themselves to address the complex and strained emotions of securing an individual identity. The personal narratives and sensitive line work of Samira Abbassy offer a beautifully crafted meditation on the conflicted self, subsequent to the dual context of the Islamic and the Western worlds. Likewise, Hadieh Shafie's process-oriented works of verse tightly bundled and secreted away vanish in a pool of ink, solicitously commenting on the lack of self-expression in some Muslim cultures. Others take the scrutiny further, such as Sa'dia Rehman's tea cups, likening women's endurance of gender specific roles to the varying degrees of shattered tea cups whose the inscriptions refer to the tradition of women serving tea, not necessarily partaking.

Yet not all is as poetically understated. Rahbar's *Flag* proclaims its political stance immediately, and the photographic works of Kamandy, albeit poetic, are dripping with somber recognition of recent trauma. Hasan Elahi's installation of international airport plans adhered to the window calls for contemplation of the role of technology and physical place when addressing political conflicts of today. While all of the artists are influenced by American and European art movements, some have laid claim more brazenly than others, as witnessed in the assertive works by Tahera Seher Shah, Javid Alibhai and others.

Regardless of how outwardly abrasive or referential the work, **Changing Climate, Changing Colors** poignantly begs us to reconsider our assumptions and question the very foundation and tradition of Muslim/Western conflict. The show's title takes inspiration from the teachings of poet (and) philosopher, Muhammad Iqbal. Influenced by Eastern and Western thought and traditions, his teachings combine Cartesian self-consciousness and Nietzsche's Grandeur of Man with the Sufi and Islamic ideals of Unity despite their differences. The artists' collective voice echoes Iqbal's teachings, representing hope within this diversity and calling to the bearers of the past for tolerance.

Zamany kay andaaz badlay gayay,
Naya raag hai, saaz badlay gayay.

The ways of Time have been changed,
There is a new tune, Instruments have been changed.

Khiraad ko ghulami say azaad kar,
Jawanon ko peero ka ustaad kar.

Liberate the mind from slavery;
Let Age be taught by Youth.

- Muhammad Iqbal (1877 - 1938)

Shelley Walker, Artist and Writer
Mareena W. Daredia, Curator