

BANNERS

London community artist Ayesha Ansari was invited by MK College to conduct a five-week workshop on Islamic art with the students from the National Diploma in Textiles.

Originally proposed by Anouar Kassim from MKACH, the workshop aims to explore a range of Islamic art forms and will produce four large banners to be displayed in Middleton Hall for the College's exhibition and award ceremony in June.

The students were split into four sections, each concentrating on a different theme: geometric, natural and organic forms, Islamic architecture and last but not least contemporary Islamic art. The students' experiments with traditional motifs, symbols and methods were given a local emphasis, drawing inspiration from the scenery and architecture of Milton Keynes itself.



Photo by Chris Clark, photography student at MK College

Sally Hutson, the course tutor stresses that as with the art of any other culture that of Islam is inextricably woven with symbolism and mythology. She believes that as with any art form, working directly with Islamic art can help to develop a deeper understanding and empathy for both the methods and the meanings behind them.

When first contacted regarding her involvement in the project, Ayesha was uncertain which angle to approach it from, being unused to working with the older traditional Islamic forms and methods. However, being a Muslim herself, the challenge appealed, as did the opportunity to use art to offer a new insight into and change perspectives of Islamic culture in general. The students' efforts will certainly offer a fresh and though provoking perspective of the very western townscape familiar to us all.

The students' artwork can be seen in Middleton Hall from 20th June.



Photo by Nicola Challis, photography student at MK College

