

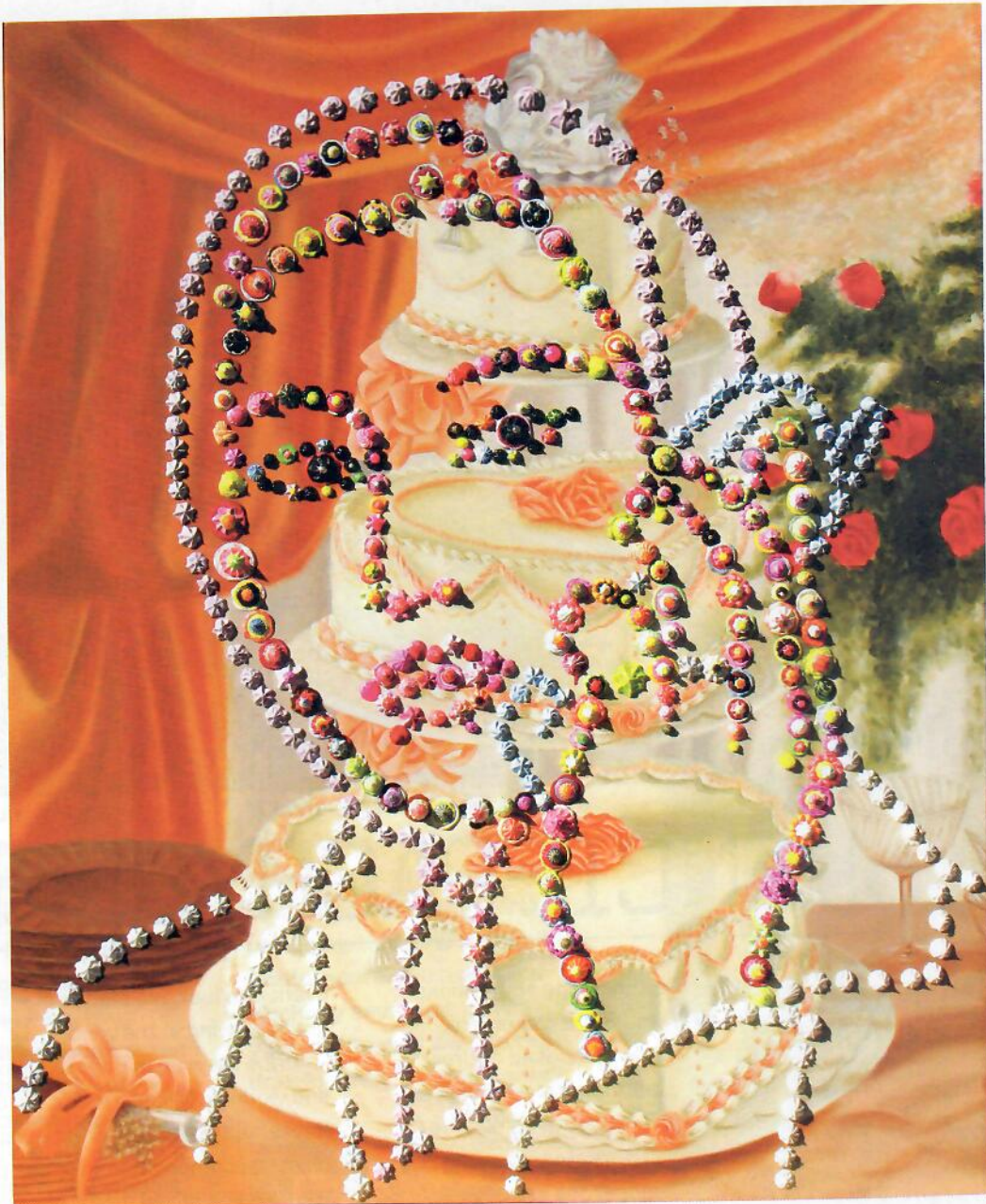
 SCHOLASTIC

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art

PERSIAN ART: Working With Pattern



Featuring contemporary artists including:
Farhad Moshiri • Shirin Neshat • Farah Ossouli

SCHOLASTIC
art

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2 Art News
+ Notes

4 Artist
Spotlight:
Persian Art

10 5 Things to
Know About
Pattern

12 Debate:
Picasso
Mystery

13 Student of
the Month

14 Hands-on
Workshop

16 Great
Art Jobs

Cover: Farhad Moshiri, *Mobile talker*, 2007. Oil, acrylic and glitter on canvas, 6.2 ft. x 59 in. Courtesy of the Artist & Galerie Perrotin, Paris.

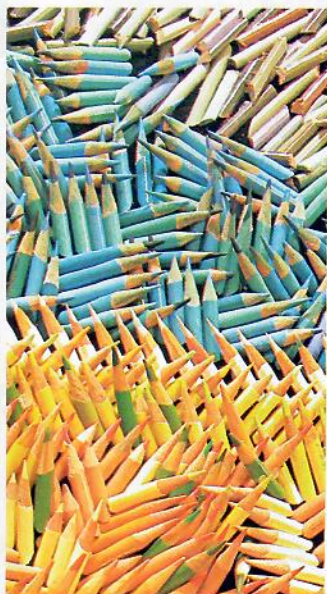


PENCIL PACHYDERM

At first glance, the image above looks like an elephant. But a closer look reveals that it is composed entirely of colored pencils! Contemporary conceptual artist Federico Uribe created the piece. He arranged the pencils to create textures and patterns that suggest the image of an elephant. Check out how the pencil fragments

overlap to look like blades of African savannah grass blowing in the wind.

Uribe grew up in Bogotá, Colombia but lives and works in Miami, Florida. He uses ordinary household objects to create visual scenes in classical compositions. He has created other works using mixed media like corks, jigsaw pieces, and even shoelaces!



▲ This detail shows that the elephant (above right) by Federico Uribe is made up of colored pencils!

Federico Uribe (b. 1962), *Elephant*, 2004. Colored pencils, 84 x 59 in. Series: Pachyderm. Courtesy of the Artist.

Real, Live Painting!

Alexa Meade is just 24 years old, but she is already a rising art star. She combines painting, photography, and performance in a unique way. If you look closely at the photo on the right, you will see that Meade is photographing a real person covered with painted lines so that he looks like a two-dimensional painting!

"I was inspired by shadows," Meade tells *Scholastic Art*. "I started painting the shadows of objects. Then I painted the objects themselves. Later I got the idea to start painting people." Meade builds and paints her set pieces. Then she paints a live model using acrylics. After a "painting" is complete, she photographs her work.

▼ Alexa Meade photographing a painted human subject for her 2010 piece, *Spectacle*.



NEW TREND: IPAD ART

Artists around the world are embracing a new medium. They're creating digital "paintings" on tablet computers like the Apple iPad. Computer paint programs have existed for a long time, but the new tablets are much more portable. Plus, they feature sensitive touch-screen technology that picks up on the subtle movements of an artist's hand.

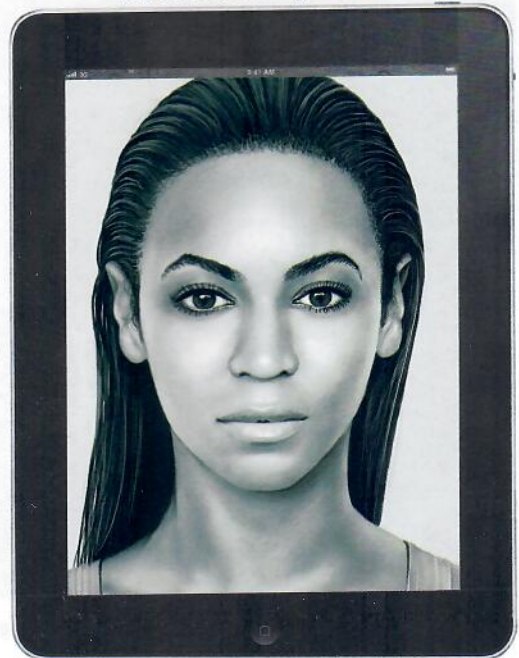
British artist Kyle Lambert created the portrait of pop

superstar Beyoncé at right using an iPad. Lambert says, "I combine traditional painting techniques with cutting-edge technology to produce realistic portraits." Even major artists are using this new technology. Contemporary artist David Hockney says that it "will change the way we use the drawing pad." Do you agree?



WEB LINK: Watch video of Kyle Lambert creating his iPad Beyoncé: scholastic.com/art

▼ This portrait of pop star Beyoncé was created entirely on an iPad!



Persian Patterns

In the hands of today's artists, traditional Persian ways of making art get a contemporary update



The area of Asia once called Persia is now known as Iran. Persian art is known for its patterns. Working thousands of years ago, artists created these patterns on ceramics. Later the same patterns were used on paintings and rugs, and they are still being used today.

“I express my understanding of life through the stories in my art.”

—Farah Ossouli



▲ This painting by Farah Ossouli is a contemporary version of a Persian miniature.

Farah Ossouli, *Lover in Fire*, 1999. Gouache on cardboard, 70 x 70 cm, 27.6 x 27.6 in. Courtesy of the Artist.

Major Miniatures

One of the best-known forms of Persian art is the **miniature**. Popularized during the 13th through 16th centuries, miniatures are small paintings made as decorative illustrations for books of stories and poetry. Skilled artists painted colorful and detailed landscapes, scenes from imperial courts, and mythical creatures using certain symbols and patterns.

Farah Ossouli is a contemporary Iranian artist who paints miniatures. In *Lover in Fire* (below left), Ossouli paints two **borders of contrasting textural patterns** divided in half by a **vertical band**. These **geometric borders and bands frame** the vibrant **organic shapes** of the scene inside.

The woman in the painting appears to be on fire. In Persian art, fire is a **symbol** of distance—she misses her husband. He has come on a winged horse from far away to put out the fire and relieve her pain. The tiny bright intricate patterned areas contrast with the **solid flat shapes** and deep colors, creating feelings of both tension and calm.

Creative Carpets

Another famous Persian art form is the carpet. Used on dirt floors in the tents of early nomadic tribes, the Persian carpet was originally made for practical purposes. However, the craft developed into a high art. People began to admire the carpets for their beauty alone. Today, Persian carpets are highly valued. They often feature decorative design elements that create distinct **pattern variations**.

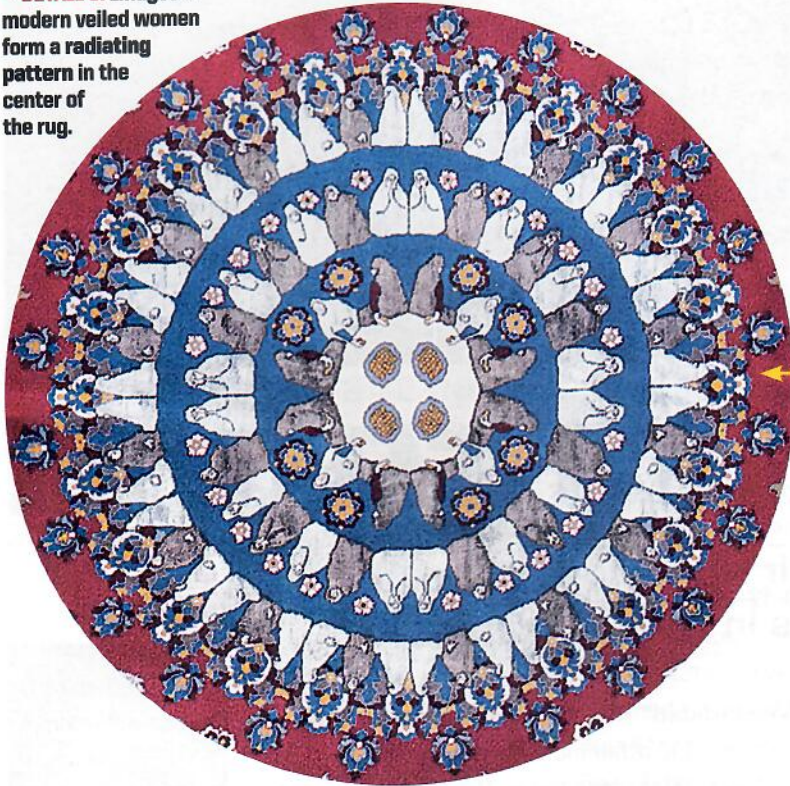
► **DETAIL 1:**
This is a traditional rug pattern called an *islimi*. Within it is woven a modern scene.



▼ **DETAIL 2:** A border of bicyclist images surrounds the rug.



▼ **DETAIL 3:** Images of modern veiled women form a radiating pattern in the center of the rug.



Nazgol Ansarinia's *Rhyme & Reason* (above right) is a traditional hand-woven Persian carpet. But if you look closely, you'll notice modern scenes of daily Iranian life woven into the design. The artist has incorporated these modern scenes with traditional symbols to form the rug's **symmetrical pattern**.

The center of the rug features a **radiating** pattern of veiled women seated around a

table (Detail 3). Some are eating, some are praying, and others are joined in conversation. Can you spot any women who are **mirror images** of one another?

Within the rug, the artist uses a traditional design element called *islimi* made up of flowing vines woven in a spiral (Detail 1). Within it, she includes a modern scene of soldiers, arguing men, and veiled women with their children.

▲ "Viewed from a distance, the rug looks ordinary. A closer look reveals a set of motifs about everyday life in Iran." —Nazgol Ansarinia

Nazgol Ansarinia (b. 1979). *Rhyme & Reason*, 2009. Handwoven wool and silk and cotton. Courtesy of the Artist.



Patterns of Protest

Meet two artists who use their work to stand up against new laws and changes in Persian culture

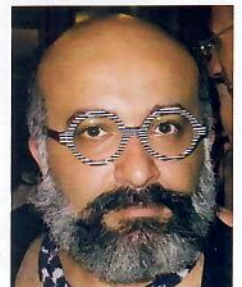
A popular uprising forced the Shah (emperor) of Iran to leave the country in 1979. This event is now known as the Iranian Revolution. The Shah had been a brutal dictator. In addition, many believed he had enriched himself on Iran's oil profits while allowing the country's citizens to live in poverty.

After the revolution, conservative Islamic religious leaders took control of Iran. They believed that under the Shah's leadership, the country's culture had become too

"Westernized." They implemented restrictions on dress and other individual freedoms that are still in place today. The after-effects of the revolution have inspired many Iranian artists, including Ramin Haerizadeh (har-i-ZAH-deh) and Shirin Neshat.

Collage On the Edge

Haerizadeh makes **collages** using **motifs** that comment on life after the revolution. He cuts out photos from magazines about Iranian society and **juxtaposes** them in unusual compositions.



▲ Ramin Haerizadeh created the collage above. Can you find the artist's image in it?

Ramin Haerizadeh, *The Luncheon on the Grass*, 2010. Mixed-media and collage on canvas, 200 × 300 cm. Courtesy of Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde; Ramin Haerizadeh: Courtesy RedVelvetNation.



“The hand is an expressive part of the body. It is an important part of my work.” —Shirin Neshat

The artist explains: “I keep chopping and changing until I get what I want. I never really know how each piece will end.”

In *The Luncheon on the Grass* (above left), the artist depicts himself having a picnic with the Shah’s wife, a woman who was known for her lavish and excessive lifestyle. The piece features a 1970s-style car and a tiara—**symbols** of oil and wealth.

In the collage, the Shah’s wife is wearing Western-style clothing, while the artist is wearing a *chador* (a traditional garment worn by Iranian women). After the revolution, a new law required all women to wear the garment when out in public. In the background, Haerizadeh uses **repeat patterns** of himself riding a broomstick while wearing the chador as a way to question this law. He visually makes fun of the idea that covering a person up makes him or her more modest inside.

Haerizadeh is not free to speak out this way in Iran. Due to safety concerns, he was forced to leave his homeland. He now lives in Dubai.

Protest of the Hands

Neshat was born in Iran but moved to the United States to go to college. When she returned home for a visit 11 years later, she found that the country had been transformed. One of the biggest changes she noticed was that women on the streets were covered from head to toe. Only a few parts of their bodies were uncovered: the face, hands, and feet.

Neshat made a series of photographs of women which highlighted the small areas of skin exposed. For *Untitled* (above), she painted a traditional **calligraphic pattern** on a woman’s clasped hands. The design is meant to express the individuality of a woman who is required to dress like everyone else.

Contemporary artist Shirin Neshat (below) painted a calligraphic pattern on a woman’s hands.

Shirin Neshat, *Untitled*, 1996. Ink on silver gelatin print mounted on Dibond Edition of 5, numbered, and 2 artist’s proofs 101.6 x 152.4 cm ©Shirin Neshat. Courtesy Galerie Jerome de Noirmont, Paris; Shirin Neshat: @Linda Bertucci, 2006. Courtesy Gladstone Gallery, New York.



Modern Motifs

These three artists use traditional Persian techniques to explore contemporary themes

About 60 percent of Iran's population today is under 30 years old. The country is divided between maintaining the rich culture and traditions of the past and embracing the modern world. Iranian contemporary artists are finding ways to explore this contradiction.

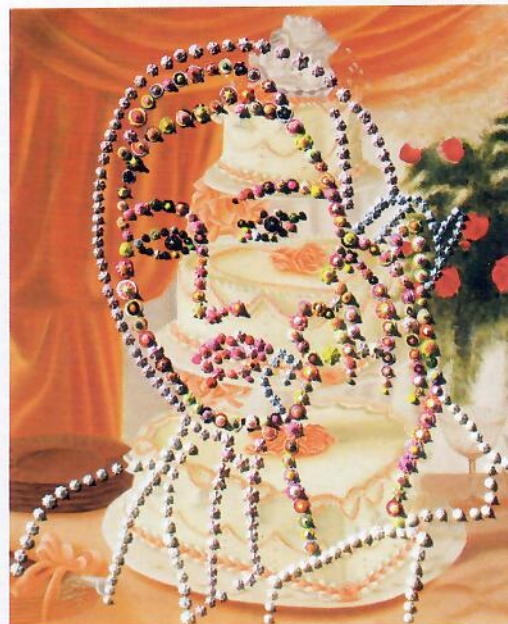
Culture Clashes

Take a look at the artwork above right. It is called *Mobile Talker* and was created by Farhad Moshiri. In the background is a **realistic** still life of a wedding cake painted in the style of a traditional miniature. Layered on top of this image is a series of **repeat dot patterns** forming the **outline** of a woman talking on a cell phone. Moshiri used cake-decorating tools to paint it. The piece is about the clash of modern technology with traditional culture.

Moshiri's artworks are often a marriage of pop culture and traditional Persian themes. For the central figure in *The Bride* (right), Moshiri **embroidered** thousands of colored stitches onto a velvet background. The bride's dress and headdress are beaded with pearls and sequins, showing the extravagance of today's consumer culture.

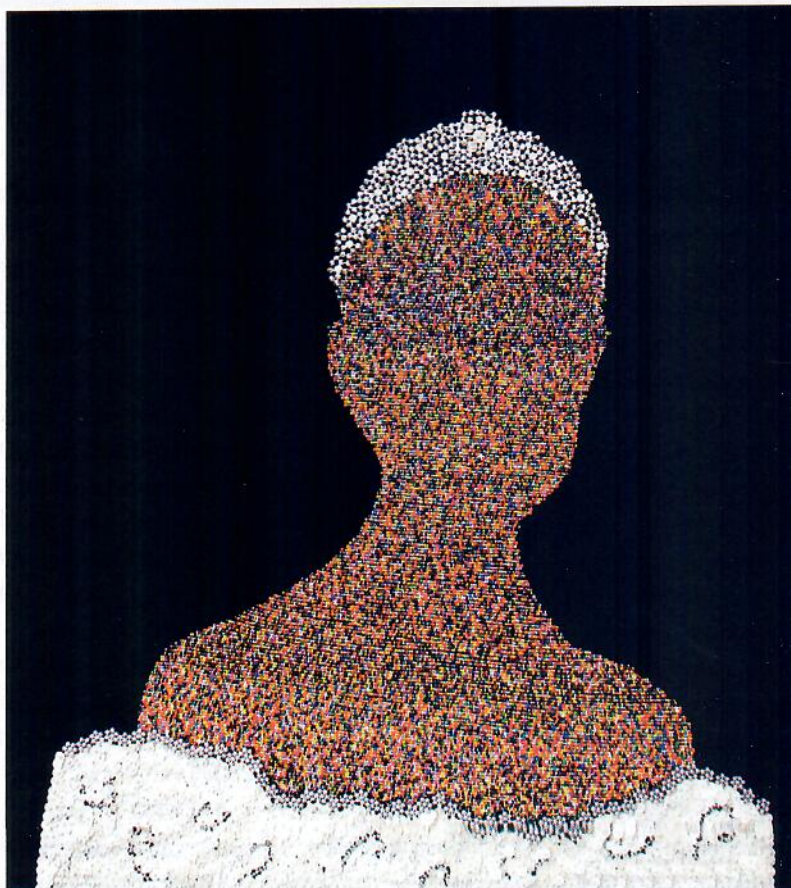
▼ Farhad Moshiri used cake-decorating tools to paint a dotted outline of a woman.

Farhad Moshiri, *Mobile talker*, 2007. Oil, acrylic and glitter on canvas, 6.2 ft. x 59 in. Courtesy of the Artist & Galerie Perrotin, Paris.



▼ Farhad Moshiri's *The Bride* is extravagantly embroidered.

Farhad Moshiri, *The Bride*, 2005. Embroidery on velvet. Courtesy of the Artist & Galerie Perrotin, Paris.



New Art From Calligraphy

Mohammed Ehsaei was a professor of calligraphy before becoming an artist. He developed a unique style of using traditional Persian script to create **abstract** works of **interlocking patterns**.

In *Loving Whisper* (right), Ehsaei uses the letters to create an abstract painting of a wheat field and its reflection. Notice how the long lines in the center are like wheat stalks and the **interwoven knots** of letters at the top and bottom look like clusters of wheat seeds at the end of the stalk.

The point of Ehsaei's calligraphy is not to read the letters. Instead, the artist wants viewers to focus on the patterns formed by the lines of interlocking letters. Do you also see patterns in the **negative space** between the letters?

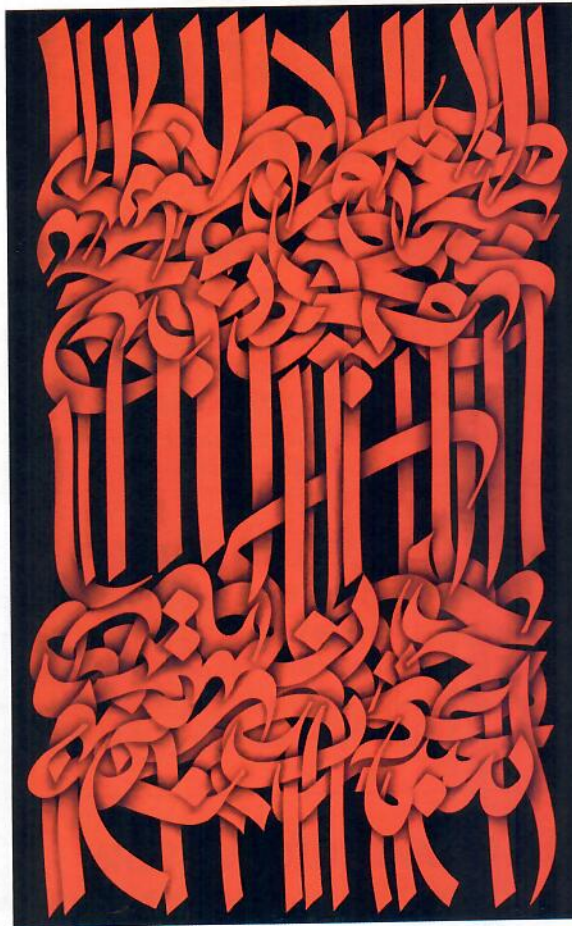
“I explore relationships, not just between letters, but within the spaces of the background.”

—Mohammed Ehsaei

Reinventing Tradition

When Kamrooz Aram was 8 years old, his family left Iran and moved to the United States. Aram is fascinated by the techniques of traditional Persian paintings and tries to use them in new and unexpected ways.

A conventional Persian artist would use the **repetition of symbols** to create a **symmetrical tableau**, or scene, but Aram deliberately avoids perfect symmetry in his paintings. In *Last Gleaming* (right), he does this by positioning several **variations** of the parakeet image around an image of the sun on either side of the painting, but not in exactly the same way. Aram has said that with his paintings, he “attempts to mimic the flawless craft of traditional art forms and purposefully come short of perfection.”



◀ Mohammed Ehsaei creates patterns from interlocking calligraphic letters.

Mohammed Ehsaei (b. 1940), *Loving Whisper*, 1973-2008. Oil on canvas. Private Collection / Photo © Christie's Images / The Bridgeman Art Library. @Mohammed Ehsaei.

▼ At first glance, this painting by Kamrooz Aram looks symmetrical, but the symmetry is purposefully flawed.

Kamrooz Aram, *Last Gleaming*, 2008. Oil on canvas, 72 x 84 in. Courtesy of the Artist and Perry Rubenstein Gallery, New York. ©Kamrooz Aram.



5 Things to Know About Pattern

Early Persian miniatures were created to illustrate stories and poetry. These small paintings are works of art on their own. An unknown Persian artist created the piece at right in the early 18th century. It features many kinds of patterns.

1 OVERALL PATTERN

This deep-blue band of pattern features **spiraling** golden vines that connect the **repeated elements** of different kinds of flowers. Although the flowers appear throughout this band, they are not always repeated in the same way—their placement is **random**. The flowers draw your eye around the painting and gives the artwork a sense of **movement**.



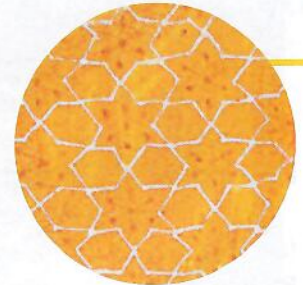
2 ALTERNATING PATTERN

This painting is so full of pattern that each individual article of clothing the people wear is made up of its own unique pattern. The horn player's robe has an abstract **calligraphic** bird image **alternating** with dashes made by a calligraphy pen. Take a look at the clothing worn by other people in the scene. What similar kinds of patterns do you see?



3 GEOMETRIC PATTERN

The wall of the palace has **interlocking geometric shapes**—the points of the stars meet and form hexagons. This kind of pattern is called a **tessellation** (a group of shapes that fit together with no overlaps or gaps). If there were no boundaries to end it, this pattern could repeat endlessly.



4 MODELING AGAINST FLAT

The artist added a **soft-edged, circular pattern** to this horse and used some **shading** to make it appear somewhat three-dimensional. The **modeled** gray horse and rider appear against a golden-colored **flat background** that sets them apart visually and adds a sense of reality to the scene.



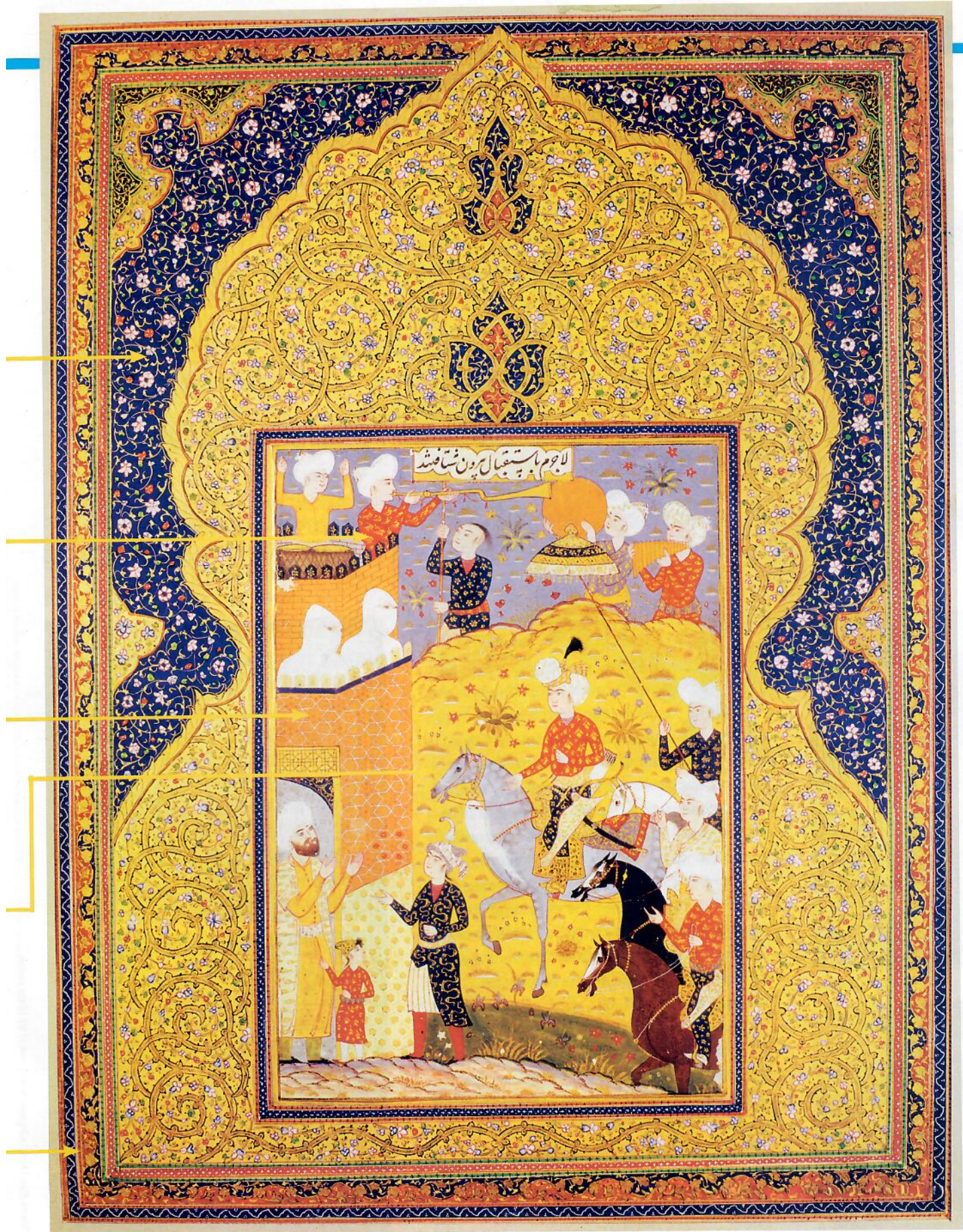
5 BORDERS WITHIN BORDERS

A series of **symmetrical** borders and bands surround the **asymmetrical** story scene. Within each border—some of them wide, some narrow—is a **repeat pattern**. Look at the complete painting on the opposite page. How many different borders and patterns can you find? Can you spot any borders that share a pattern?



► Persian miniature makers were masters at combining patterns.

The Arrival of the Messenger, Beginning of the 18th century. Location: Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, France. Photo Credit: Shark / Art Resources, NY.



DEBATE

► Picasso's electrician claims these artworks were a gift. The artist's family thinks otherwise.

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973), *Still Life with Glass*, *Painting of a Hand*. Both works: AP Photo Images/© 2011 Estate of Pablo Picasso/ Artists Rights Society (ARS), N.Y., N.Y.



Picasso Mystery

A famous artist's electrician came forward with 271 previously unknown works. Did he steal them?

► **What Do You Think?**

Post your opinion at:
scholastic.com/art



Pablo Picasso ▲



Pierre Le Guennec ▲

A retired electrician shocked the art world late last year when he came forward with 271 never-before-seen sketches, drawings, collages, and watercolors by renowned artist Pablo Picasso.

Many of the works were unknown or thought to have been lost. They are worth about \$80 million. How the electrician came to possess the artworks is a matter of debate.

Pierre Le Guennec worked for Picasso in the 1970s. He says that the artist and his wife gave him the art as a gift. Picasso's son Claude disputes these claims. He believes Le Guennec stole the art. He has filed a lawsuit to recover it.

Picasso was famously generous with his art. However, the number of pieces combined with the fact that most are unsigned—the artist always signed and dated his work when he gave it away—casts doubt on Le Guennec's claims. The police are investigating, but for now, the truth remains a mystery. What do you think—did the electrician get the art as a gift or did he steal it?

THE ART WAS A GIFT. HERE'S WHY:

- Picasso and his wife were known to give away art. It is reasonable that he would give some to his electrician.
- If the electrician had stolen the art, he probably wouldn't have come forward with it publicly.
- The art is worth a lot of money. Now Picasso's family wants it back. The electrician should be given the benefit of the doubt.

THE ART WAS STOLEN. HERE'S WHY:

- Sure Picasso gave away art, but 271 pieces is a lot of art. Le Guennec's story doesn't make sense.
- The artwork is unsigned and undated. If Picasso had given it as a gift, he would have signed it.
- Picasso's family shouldn't take the electrician at his word. They were right to ask the police to investigate to see if a crime was committed.

Pattern From Nature

Sarah Beckwith made her drawings into an amazing pattern

A *mandala* is a kind of pattern-filled art designed to help people focus when they meditate. When 17-year-old Sarah Beckwith created her mandala, she learned an important lesson. "I'm usually easily distracted," says Sarah. "Focusing on the details of the piece helped me learn to focus and be patient." Sarah is currently a Junior at Lansing High School in New York.

When did you first get serious about art?

I took my first serious art class during my freshman year in high school, and loved it.

What inspired this award-winning piece?

My art teacher assigned us to create a mandala based on one theme.

Why did you choose the theme of nature?

I live in a woody area and love nature. I chose my animals based on how their shape worked as part of the pattern. I love how the eagle blends into antlers that blend into the rodent, how the frog foot turns into a flower, and the rodent's foot turns into a tree. I picked the curved fernlike leaf because its shape tied the center together.

How did you create your piece? I drew each element on tracing paper. Then



How many different kinds of animals can you spot in Sarah's pattern?

I shrank or enlarged each, overlapped them, and juxtaposed them until I created patterns I liked. I traced the whole mandala onto black cardstock paper using white carbon paper. Then I colored it in using Prismacolor pencils. Finally, I mounted the piece on white mat board.

What was the most challenging part?

Coloring in the details. To create vibrant hues with the pencils, I had to lay a white line down first, then color over each white line. I also had to carefully blend colors together to get just the right tones.

Do you have any advice for aspiring artists like yourself? Before this piece, I had avoided working in great detail. I took a risk by taking on this piece, and it was totally worth it. When I was done, I realized that I can actually draw. It felt great.

Scholastic Art & Writing Awards

Sarah won a gold medal for drawing in the 2010 Scholastic Art & Writing Awards. To find out more about this program, ask your teacher to call 212-343-6892 or go to artandwriting.org.



▲ Sarah Beckwith

Design a Pattern

Use what you've learned about Persian patterns to design your own colorful grid pattern

You've seen the important role that pattern has played in historical and contemporary Persian art. In this workshop, you'll work with a grid to learn a simple technique for designing intricate patterns.

MATERIALS

- 9"x12" white sulfite paper
- 14"x14" white sulfite paper
- 18" ruler
- Compass
- Protractor
- Variety of templates and stencils in various shapes
- No. 2 pencil
- Vinyl eraser
- X-Acto knife
- Colored pencils
- Photo copier



STEP 1 Measure Out Your Grid and Squares

First, lightly draw a pencil grid on the 14"x14" sheet of paper. Measure out a 12"x12" square and mark out a grid of 1-inch squares inside it. There will be a 1-inch perimeter around the grid. You'll use the 9"x12" sheet to measure the squares you'll use to develop your design. Anywhere on the paper, measure out three 1"x6" horizontal rows divided into 1-inch squares. **TIP: Be sure to measure precisely and accurately.**



▲ With stencils, draw simple shapes in your squares. Keep adding one more shape to each square in the row.

STEP 2 Develop Your Pattern Elements

You will create three separate designs—one for each row on the 9"x12" sheet. Start with the first row. Use a stencil to draw a simple shape in the first square. The shape can be completely closed or it can run off the edge. Color or outline the shape in black. In the second square, repeat the first shape exactly and add a new whole or partial shape. You may add a second color. Keep building like this for the remaining squares in the row. Do two more design rows, working in this same way. **TIP: Keep it simple. Avoid complex design shapes.**

◀ **USING ENCAPSULATION:** Allison repeats geometric shapes—diamonds, triangles, trapezoids. Large shapes (stand back from the work to see the largest) encapsulate, or are made up of, smaller ones.

► **USING A FOCAL POINT:** Cody focuses attention on the center of her design by creating a pattern within a pattern. Red circles have become purple in that area and black outlines highlight the grid in the center.

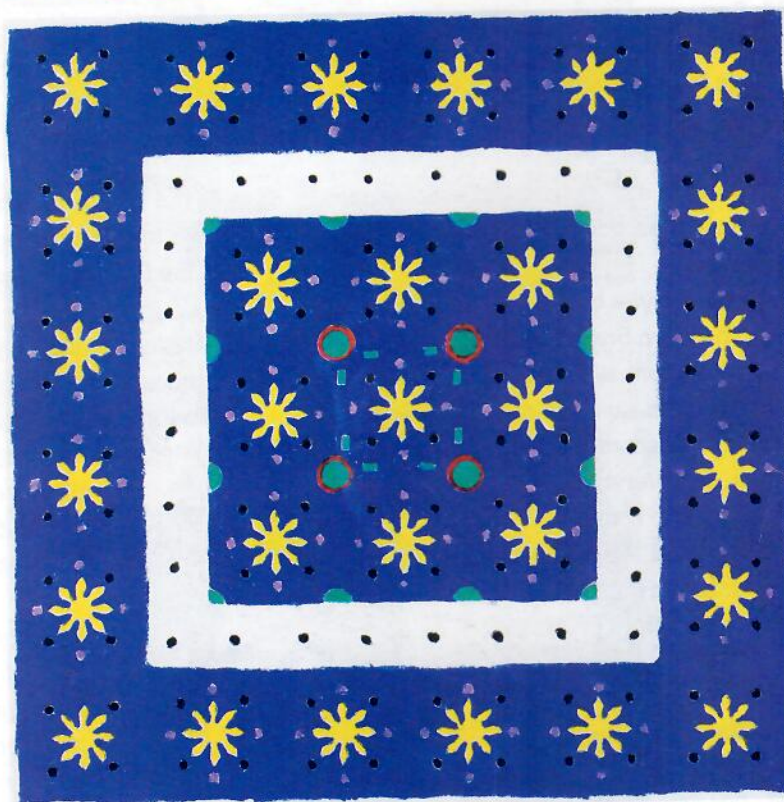
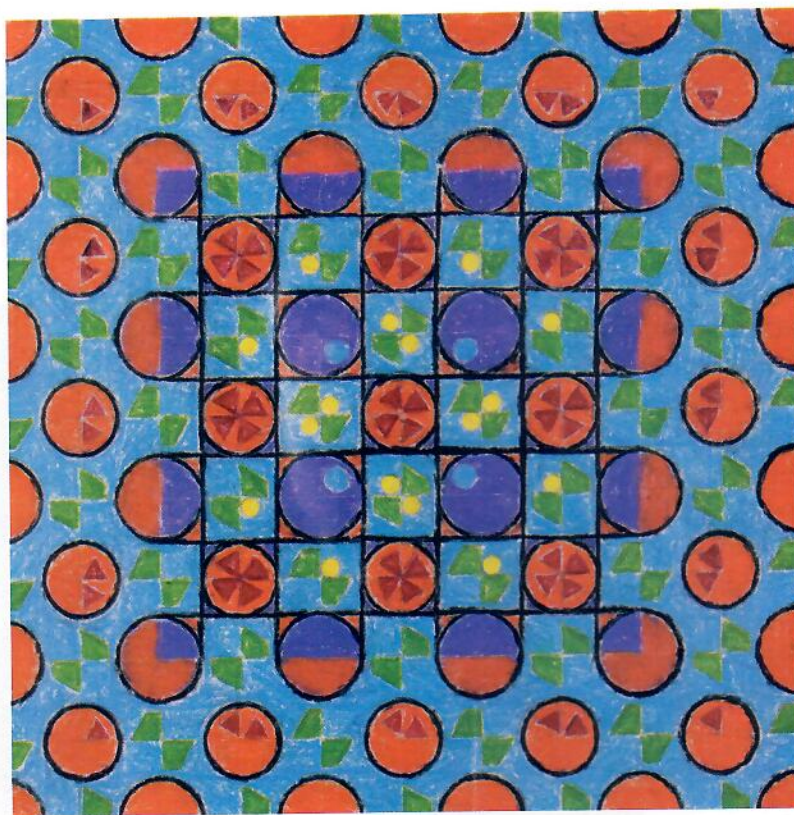


▲ Arrange your most successful designed squares into a pattern. Then copy it onto a new sheet.

STEP 3 Finalize Your Pattern

Choose the strongest of your three pattern strips to work with. Make three photocopies of that strip and carefully cut out each square (with the copies and the original you should have 24). Arrange the squares on the 12"x12" grid sheet. Rotate and rearrange the squares until you have the beginnings of a strong composition. Square by square, copy your chosen design onto the grid. Continue until you have filled in all 144 squares. Use colored pencils to color in the squares and complete your color grid pattern.

TIP: Copy your designs carefully and pay attention to craftsmanship.



▲ **USING BORDERS:** Madeline began with a black dot in the center of her first white square. Put together, the squares form a white interior border. She put part of the yellow star shape in one corner, then rotated and combined four squares to make a whole star. These repeated star shapes form the outside border.

Prepared by Ned J. Nesti, Jr., Art Instructor, Morrison Junior High School, Morrison, IL, and Jamie L. Hermon, Art Instructor, Polo Community High School, Polo, IL. Artwork by Allison L. Byrd, Cody E. Benda, and Madeline L. Kull.

Doodling for Dollars

Michael Lopez talks about creating doodles for the Google home page

SCHOLASTIC ART: What is your job?

MICHAEL LOPEZ: I am the chief doodler at Google. I create many of the graphic variations on the Google logo that you see on our home page. I also manage a team of doodlers. It's a really fun job!

SA: What is the purpose of the doodles?

ML: We create doodles that celebrate holidays and other important events. We feature a lot of doodles about milestones in innovation and technology, because they represent the culture of Google.

SA: Can users suggest ideas for doodles?

ML: Sure! A great way for kids and teens to do this is to enter the Doodle 4 Google contest (see Web link). Students in grades K-12 can create their own doodles and compete for a chance to win scholarships and have their doodles featured on the site.

SA: How do you create a doodle?

ML: The team brainstorms ideas and sketches them. We all have different artistic backgrounds, so some of us work in oil or acrylic, and some of us work in pencil on paper. But everything is scanned into a computer and digitized. We refine or even re-create the image on the computer before posting it on the site.

SA: What is challenging about your job?

ML: Our canvas is really small. And we are working with a very recognizable logo.



▲ Lopez's doodles often celebrate achievements in technology. The one on the top is for the 20th anniversary of the Hubble Space Telescope. The other one is for the invention of the X-ray.

At the beginning of each project, we really have to think through how the composition of the final design will work with the logo.

SA: What skills do you need to succeed as a Google doodler?

ML: It is good to have a broad skill set. Studying fine art and traditional illustration gives you a great base, but understanding digital illustration is important too.

SA: What is the best part of your job?

ML: I get to draw at work! And hundreds of millions of people see my art. That's amazing!



▲ Michael Lopez

CAREER PROFILE

GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Salary: First-year graphic designers make an average of \$30,000, depending on location, project, and experience.

Education: Most graphic designers have a bachelor's degree in graphic design or a related field, such as fine art or illustration.

Getting Started:

- ▶ Draw. Practice sketching faces, figures, and objects.
- ▶ Go digital. Learn computer illustration programs such as Photoshop and Corel Painter.

WEB LINK: Find out more about the Doodle 4 Google contest: scholastic.com/art

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