

# MEDIA AND ISLAM

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1      FEBRUARY 6, 2005

## THE SOUTH BAY ISLAMIC ASSOCIATION MEDIA COMMITTEE

Farah S. Khan

Over the years, Muslims have gone from being a virtual non-issue to becoming the subject of books, conferences, articles, and more. The media has an increasingly important role in steering everyday events, policies, and culture in order to impose certain concepts. But what can we as Muslims do to defend the message of Islam when it becomes misconstrued?

The solution is to *provide* Islamic perspectives on issues in the media by educating the media to present a correct image of Islam. We can work to promote an American Muslim Identity by building alliances with Muslim and non-Muslim

groups, and by cultivating relationships with opinion and decision makers.

The South Bay Islamic Association Media Committee was formed in 2001 to promote our community's participation with the media. We collaborate with local television, radio, newspaper vehicles to better educate the public about Islam and to encourage positive portrayal of Muslims in the media. Our charter is to train and empower our Muslim community in exactly how to work positively with various media forms and to become active participants in the media process, insh'Allah.

We have coordinated Mosque Open Houses,

Media Training Seminars, Major Eid –ul- Fitr and Eid-al-Adha events involving high ranking public service and officials of other faiths, Interfaith Iftars, and a Media Banquet.

Stereotypes and prejudice do persist but one person can make a difference. The SBIA Media Committee is always looking for new members and fresh ideas to add to our growing team.



Robert Handa at Media Awards

No prior experience is necessary. If you are interested in this wonderful opportunity to create da'wah and help influence the public's perception of our faith and our community, please join us! Please send an email to [sbiamc@yahoo.com](mailto:sbiamc@yahoo.com).

## SBIA'S FIRST ANNUAL MEDIA BANQUET

Bushra Burney

In November, the SBIA media committee presented our first media awards banquet to thank those in the media who have reported stories of Muslims and Islam in a positive light, distancing themselves from the usual bias present in the

media regarding Islam. This event was a tremendous success. The recipients of the media awards were Robert Handa of KTVU, Tom Wilson of KNTV, Mathai Kuruvila of The San Jose Mercury News, and Police Chief Rob Davis. Not only did we have these

distinguished guests, but our invited guests included a myriad of people of different races and professions, ensuring a diverse audience that mingled well with the SBIA regulars also present at the event.

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### UPCOMING EVENTS:

- 02/12- SBIA Media Committee Meeting at SBIA Library at 11am  
New Members Welcome
- 03/12- SBIA Islamic Art Exhibit

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## 24— PAINTING THE PICTURE OF A MUSLIM TERRORIST

Bushra Burney

As of now, many of you have undoubtedly heard about the FOX show *24* and how the villains include Arabs and Muslims. *Not again*, you say. *When will the madness end?* Deviating from the usual 'Arab Terrorist' formula, the writers of *24* have gone one step further: the villains in this case include an entire Muslim family who has integrated into the American life. They had come 4 years prior to establish themselves among the Americans. Many of us are part of immigrant families. While many who watch would recognize *24* for what it is, a fictional TV show, those that are ignorant may transfer what they see on TV to real life.

Many of us in the community try hard to combat stereotypes. To constantly have these misconceptions of Islam constantly reinforced on popular dramas does not do us any good. CAIR has already issued a statement regarding the show and has

even contacted the producers of *24*, creating Public Service Announcements to be shown after episodes of *24*.

And then there's the question: Is it just our turn? I'm not saying that it is ok to make Muslims villains, but there have been many different groups that have taken turns representing villains in Hollywood. In fact, Russians have been portrayed as the proverbial bad guys for decades, a trend that is still not over. For instance, a new episode of *Alias* featured Russians trying to integrate themselves in American culture, complete with the American accent, in order to move to the U.S. to properly blend in with society, becoming the ultimate sleeper cell. Unfortunately for us, Muslims have been the 'in' villain for the media for the past few years.

I am still trying to hold on to some hope. This could maybe turn out to be like Season 2 of *24* when the villain initially was an Arab Muslim, but the main organizers, the people in the background that were pulling the strings, were American businessmen hoping to profit if the U.S. went to war with Arab countries. Maybe something like that could happen here. I will do my part and keep on watching to find out where the path of *24* leads to. Hopefully, the good name of Islam will not be tarnished by the events that unfold.

If you have concerns about this series and would like to voice your opinion, please contact us at [sbiamc@yahoo.com](mailto:sbiamc@yahoo.com).

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### THE MEDIA BANQUET— CONTINUED

Some may wonder why we need to go out of our way and thank Non-Muslims for doing their job. Granted, people should always do well without trying to seek any kind of recognition, but it is important to reach out

to those around us who may not belong in our ranks but still respect us. Because the people in our community have made an effort to let our thanks to those reporters and editors responsible, SBIA has established positive relations with these and other individuals.

Through these contacts, we can be sure our religion will be reported fairly in the future, InshAllah.



Matthai Kuruvila at the Media Awards

## SBIA MEDIA COMMITTEE

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### INTRODUCTION TO: THE SCIENCE OF LANGUAGE & PSYCHOLOGY

Imam Bilal ibn Muhammed

Bismilla Ir Rahman Araheem

As-Salaamu– Alaeekum

In the science of the language of psychology the Shaitan uses what he calls the language of rules ( Man-made rules and laws). This science of the language of the rules is designed to rule in freedom of creative thought and liberated intelligence.

To be on guard and recognize such language, watch out for words such as “Must”, “Must not”, “Should”, “Should not”, “Can't”, or “Cannot”, etc.

Linguistically these word–types are designed to limit your thinking. Block your outside awareness; and restrict progressive behavior. The psychology of Shaitan is “My rules govern your behavior”.

Also in the science of linguistics and psychology , be on the lookout for mass generalizations. Be aware of such words as “All”, “Every”, “Always”, “Never”, “Everybody”, “Everyone”, “They-say”, etc. These word types are called “catch-alls”, and are very effective for the purpose of lying.

Finally, become conscious and aware of the Angel of Relativity. If the Shaitan says “Democracy is better, easier”- the question is “better than what”; easier than what? If he says “Worse” ask “worse than what?”. These are a few introductions and pointers . If we begin to gradually get a grasp of how Shaitan has used and does use language– from his suggestion to Aadam (A.S.) to his suggestions to our present-day Islamic governing councils, we will gradually become stronger Muslims.

As-Salaamu– Alaeekum.

### The Committee

Farah S. Khan

*Chairperson*

Adeel Iqbal

*Former Chairman*

Irfan Rydhan

*Public Relations*

Bushra Burney

*Secretary/Finance Director*

Najib Azhar

*Webmaster*

Muhammad Azizuddin

*Technical Director*

Imam Bilal ibn Muhammed

*Training Director*

Farrukh Shah Khan

*Production Director*

Mertze Dahlin

*Recruitment Director*

Azleena Azhar

*Volunteer Coordinator*

### MEDIA FACTS

Irfan Rydhan

Approximate number of daily newspapers in North America: 1800

Approximate number of magazines in North America: 11,000

Approximate number of radio stations in North America: 11,000

Approximate number of television stations in North America: 2000

Approximate number of book publishers in North America: 3000

Number of companies owning a controlling interest in the media listed above in 1984: 50

Number of companies owning a controlling interest in the media listed above in 1996: 10

Number of companies owning a controlling interest in the media listed above in 2002: 6

(From “Now With Bill Moyer”, taken from the PBS Website)

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## AN ISLAMIC IMAGE: CALLIGRAPHY AS GRAPHICS

We are exposed to hundreds of visual images every day, at work and at home, in print and on screen, while shopping, reading, traveling or playing. These images build our aesthetic sensibilities, affect our behavior, and form a part of our personality. As Muslims, we should make a conscious effort to balance these images with ones of Islamic character.

One area where this need is obvious is when we want to identify a product, a service, or an organization with a logo that communicates its personality and conveys a certain impression about what it is or what it does. When providing

design services to many Islamic organizations and publications I try to convey an Islamic image using contemporary vocabulary. It is my belief that we can, and should, learn a great deal by studying the impressive heritage of our ancestors, and by practicing the traditional Islamic arts. The need to embrace our traditional arts is more crucial now than ever because of our continuous exposure to the powerful media images of a different culture.

Muslims should learn to use the new technologies in publishing and graphics without replacing their visual consciousness and heritage in the process. We should encourage the high-

est standards of creativity, quality, and professionalism, without associating these values with European forms of visual communication.

Muslims in North America, like those in other places, can not build a whole and healthy community without encouraging the development of a visual language that reflects our unique identity, both within our community, and while dealing with other cultures around us.

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Islamic\\_Image.html](http://www.sakkal.com/Islamic_Image.html)

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**SBIA Presents...**

## **Islamic Art Exhibit**

**Saturday March 12th**

**10am– 8pm**

### **Showcasing**

Islamic Calligraphic Artwork

Inspirational Islamic Posters

Modern Islamic Art Mural

Islamic Ceramics & Dinnerware

### **Presenting**

Spoken Word Performances

Hourly Presentation about

Artwork

### **No Tickets Needed**

Bring your family and friends to  
enjoy Islamic Art & Calligraphy

SBIA Downtown Center