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Buffalo Arts Studio presents:
Muhammad Zaman, *Morphing Essence*
Exhibition: October 6–November 11, 2023
Opening Reception: Friday, October 27, 2023, 5:00–8:00 pm
Part of M&T Bank Fourth Friday at Tri-Main Center



Buffalo Arts Studio presents *Morphing Essence*, an exhibition of new work by urban artist Muhammad Z. Zaman. Zaman has combined gestural brush strokes and calligraphic markings with the energy of street art to create this dynamic set of smaller works. *Morphing Essence* is on display **October 6–November 11, 2023**, with an artist reception on **Friday, October 27, 5:00–8:00 pm**. The exhibition and reception are free and open to the public.

Originally from Bangladesh, Zaman immigrated to the United States and made his home on Buffalo's East Side. The graffiti he observed on the train cars growing up inspired a strong desire to express himself as an artist. Zaman uses a mix of English, Bengali, and Arabic lettering in his work, juxtaposing layers of colors and calligraphic marks, encouraging viewers to look closely as they try to decipher the meaning of each work. The curiosity in decoding Zaman's work reveals the viewers' desire to understand his message; creating the audience's contention between meaning and perception. Zaman's work questions the existence of a unique message in art, enjoying the varied perceptions from viewers. His work is a dance between language, communication, and understanding with the titles creating a path of meaning that one can choose to follow or abandon. His art explores themes of immigration, cultural differences, mutual respect, and peaceful coexistence.

Morphing Essence is a series of calligraffiti paintings on wood created with iridescent new-generation paints. Zaman's brand of calligraffiti is one of the most contemporary interpretations of Hurufiyya art, an aesthetic movement that emerged in the second half of the twentieth century amongst Muslim artists, who used their understanding of traditional Islamic calligraphy within the precepts of modern art. When iridescent colors are used on a flat surface, the microparticles contained in the color create a morphing effect from refractive angles of light that is very subtle when the viewer is still. The color shift is far more dramatic when one moves through the gallery and views the work from different angles. The effect is achieved by interfering with the reflection and refraction of light from the painted object's surface.

For this project, Zaman has used the changing colors of the paint as a metaphor for the adaptability required of so many of us during these tumultuous times. Zaman has moved beyond his signature style—ancient calligraphy in a modern and urban setting—transforming his artistic production to amplify the allegory. The innovative materials and adapted artist's mark become a discourse on change, reflecting both the personal and the communal shifts that have held Zaman's attention in recent years.

Muhammad Zaman joined Buffalo Arts Studio as a Studio Artist in July 2016. He has shown in solo and group exhibitions all over the world, including the United States, England, United Arab Emirates, Luxembourg, Japan, and Italy. Zaman has completed murals in New York State for Buffalo AKG (formerly Albright-Knox Art Gallery), Burchfield Penney Art Gallery, and Underground Railroad Heritage Center. He was awarded Artist of the Year by Arts Service Inc. of Western New York in 2019. Zaman was the recipient of the 2023 NYSCA Support for Artists grant.

For more information about Buffalo Arts Studio, please visit www.buffaloartsstudio.org

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High resolution images available upon request.