

# Mirror of the Divine: Art in the Bahá'í World Community



**Provides Ideal Reading for Participants in any of the Courses of the Ruhi Institute, and in any of the Four Core Activities.**

The Universal House of Justice has encouraged the use of the arts in all of the Four Core Activities - Study Circles, Devotional Gatherings, Children's Classes and Youth Activities. According to Book 7 of the Ruhi Institute, the arts should be included as an "essential element" in "every study circle", for they can "enhance the spiritual development of the participants" and contribute to the spiritual vitality of community life (p. 111).



**A Basic Bahá'í Resource for Study of the Core Concepts of the Arts**

**Derives from the Bahá'í Teachings a New, World-Embracing  
and Stimulating Vision of the Arts and their Practice**



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- ❖ What is the nature of the spiritual role the arts can play in a new era?
- ❖ In what ways can the arts contribute to the well-being of humanity?
- ❖ How can we include the arts in the Four Core Activities, including Study Circles?
- ❖ What is involved? What kind of arts are implied? Are crafts counted as arts?
- ❖ Where do we draw the line in the expression of reverence? How far do we go in practicing a cultural tradition, if some aspects of the tradition are not quite in keeping with Bahá'í values?

*Mirror of the Divine* offers direct answers, derived from the Writings, to many of the most basic and vital questions regarding the arts. Moreover, on the level of the day-to-day issues that arise in the process of community building, it provides the reader with basic values and an outlook that can empower each individual and community to come up with their own answers. The only book of its kind in Bahá'í literature, it is a product of many years of research undertaken by author Ludwig Tuman. 326 pages, **over 200 quotations** from the Bahá'í Writings relevant to the arts (many of which are not found in compilations on the arts), and **100 illustrations**. Highly recommended for core activities, study circles, artists, Spiritual Assemblies, schools, and all who are interested in the arts.

**Some of the arts referenced in *Mirror of the Divine* (in alphabetical order):**

Architecture ♦ Beadwork ♦ Calligraphy ♦ Ceramics ♦ Clothing design ♦ Dance ♦ Embroidery ♦ Environmental design ♦ Film ♦ Floral design ♦ Garden & Landscape design ♦ Industrial design ♦ Interior design ♦ Jewelry ♦ Literature ♦ Metalwork ♦ Music ♦ Origami ♦ Painting ♦ Photography ♦ Poetry ♦ Pottery ♦ Puppetry ♦ Rug-weaving ♦ Sandpainting ♦ Sculpture ♦ Stained glass-setting ♦ Stonework ♦ Story-telling ♦ Tapestry ♦ Theater ♦ Urban design ♦ Wall Mosaics ♦ Woodcraft

(More on reverse)

**About the author:** In addition to his work as a writer and speaker, Ludwig Tuman is by profession a composer, performing pianist, music educator and producer. For more information, and for music and downloadable materials related to the arts, see

[www.LudwigTuman.com](http://www.LudwigTuman.com)

His published writings on the arts include several articles, among them "The Spiritual Role of Art," which received the Association for Bahá'í Studies' Award for Excellence, and was published in *The Bahá'í World, Vol XX*. His writings have been translated to German and Spanish.

## *Some Responses to Mirror of the Divine...*

"...beautifully presented"

- *Hand of the Cause Amatu'l-Bahá Rúhiyyih Khánum*

"...We must congratulate you for your brilliant exposition of Baha'i perspective about art. Yours is a pioneering work and we have no doubt, it will be gratefully welcomed by all lovers of art both within the Baha'i community and the world at large."

- *R. N. Shah, Secretary, National Spiritual Assembly of the Bahá'ís of India*

"...a timely, audacious and challenging work... Artists working in all disciplines and thoughtful people in general will applaud this seminal contribution to Bahá'í literature."  
"I cannot praise it too highly."

- *Roger White, poet, author of Witness of Pebbles and A Sudden Music*

"...deftly produced," "an excellent, thought-provoking piece of writing."

- *Constance M. Chen, in a book review for Bahá'í Studies, Vol. 7*

"Mr Tuman knows his subject very well indeed and one is enlightened by his analyses..."  
"*Mirror of the Divine* is relevant to the future progress of all artistic expression."

- *Bahá'í Reviewing Panel for the United Kingdom*

"As an avid reader on the subjects of art and spirituality, I have to say that *Mirror of the Divine* is simply the best book on the arts I have ever read, whether from a Bahá'í perspective or any other, whether from our time period or any previous."

- *Michael W. Hughey, graphic artist and designer, owner of Twin Dolphin Enterprises*

"In the Bahá'í community we are encouraged to deepen on the subject of the arts in order to more effectively tap into their spiritual power. We learn about the importance of the arts in Book 7 of the Ruhi Institute and need supplemental reading on the subject. For this purpose we have an ideal resource in *Mirror of the Divine*. It explores relevant quotations from the Bahá'í Writings, showing how they combine to form a new and uplifting vision of art. But it goes far beyond art theory and is also highly practical, drawing on the Writings to find solutions to many of the challenges faced by artists and communities. I highly recommend it, without reservations, for study circles, artists of all kinds, Spiritual Assemblies, schools, and all those wishing to promote the aims of the present Plan and future ones through the arts."

- *Dr. Leslie Asplund, musical theatre producer; organizer of the 2002 Arts Conference in the Bahá'í Festival of the Arts, New York*



(More on reverse)