زبانے کا انسان، ایک لیبری کا صحبت کار

ایک لیبری کے اعلان کے طور پر بیانات کی جگہ اور بتایہ ہوئے ان کی ہستوری کے ٹریف آرڈی نے ہم الہام دی ہے 82 ملین روپے سے تجاوز کر کیے۔

اپنے موثر ارکیو، تہوار کی بھیجا کا باعث بنی پہلی کے نام سے کوئی تحقیقی ہاتی۔

آئیوری کا جوشی
ملااریا کا پیشگیری اور معالجہ

1. میکروپاپہ میں ملالے کا پٹھان کریں。
2. ہزاروں میشوشوں کے لئے ملالے کی درمان کی روشیں شائع کریں۔
3. ملالے کی ویمنہ اور وڈی کھڑیاں میں تعلیمی کمپینج کریں۔
4. ملالے کے مخصوص تیونز میں تعلیمی کمپینج کریں۔
5. ملالے کے اپنے بچوں کے لئے اپنے بچوں کے لئے تعلیمی کمپینج کریں۔

WORLD MALARIA DAY APRIL 25

"Humane Innovation To Reduce The Malaria Disease Burden And Save Lives"
CG is the medium

Muqeeem Khan is a visual effects artist, who has worked with Walt Disney and Square USA, on movies like Deep Rising, George of the Jungle, Flubber, Armageddon and Final Fantasy.

He holds a Masters Degree in Industrial Design from Ohio State University and has presented research papers at international forums. Slogan finds out what makes Muqeeem Khan so special.

To start with, says Muqeeem Khan, he was lucky to have ended up at Walt Disney. His first break came when he worked with the team of ‘George of the Jungle’ on the CG character, Papa the elephant. He then worked on ‘Flubber’ and ‘Armageddon’. Among the many scenes to his credit in ‘Armageddon’, the one at the beginning which shows a space shuttle being destroyed by a meteor shower was completely his. ‘Final Fantasy: The Spirit Within’ was his next project.

During this collaboration, Muqeeem learned that his most important tool was his brain, followed by his hand and then his pencil and paper. He used the Alias software when working for Disney, besides Maya in ‘Armageddon’ and Pixar’s RenderMan along with Maya for ‘Final Fantasy’.

However, a sketchpad always used to be within reach beside his keyboard when working at the production houses. His learning philosophy during those days was to be like a sponge trying to learn whatever came his way and reminding himself constantly that he knew nothing. He elaborates: “If you think that right after you know that you know, you really do not know, I am still a practitioner of this philosophy and consider myself a knowledge-seeking rather than an expert. You have to be prepared to absorb as many things in a short time. But please make sure that in this rapidly changing world, you do not have to change yourself, you have to be yourself first and then you have to be you.”

The advice he renders to his students as an assistant professor at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar is in the same vein: “It might as well teach you Microsoft Word, but that would make you no Shakespeare! Likewise, you may learn the ins and outs of Photoshop but that won’t make you a Picasso or a Michelangelo. These are all new tools and we should not ignore mental development and nourish them to go with the thinking and problem-solving skills that are the genuine foundation of all creative and fresh work. I always try not to let tools win over mental proverbs when teaching my students.”

Muqeeem says music, art, design, computer graphics – all these are various media of expression and he finds them rewarding because he thinks he can express himself through them in different manners and moods.

For him to have come this far was not planned; it just happened to him as he took all of his interests along simultaneously.

For him, computer animation is both an art and a science – a combination of art and technology to depict movement. Animators are constantly struggling and trying to generate purposeful content to justify the need and to fulfill the desire of an artistic brain for aesthetically balancing visual experiences. As an artist, nature is Muqeeem’s primary influence. He is moved by the waves of the sea, the demeanor of a pleasant person or the crawling of a child on his knees and palms, the rain or how there’s impossible to look through and not just the visuals but the accompanying sounds, acoustics, smells and experiences – everything in nature inspires him.

“All these sources are so abundant and remarkable that all a person needs to do is observe – and learn. Creativity, I believe, is not really constructing something entirely new; it’s about observing what has already been created and then rearranging the elements in a novel manner, because that is all you can actually do,” he says.
Bright future for gaming industry

By Peter Townson
Staff Reporter

Movie lovers will not have to wait long before taking part in their own Hollywood stories according to a local expert, who said that cinema-goers will soon be able to take on villains, rescue damsels in distress or even play the bad guy in interactive film experiences.

Maqeen Khan, who currently works at Northwestern University, is an expert in animation and has worked on films such as Armageddon, Flubber, George of the Jungle and Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within, among many others.

Khan gave a presentation at the first edition of Platform Doha this week, in which he outlined some of the processes behind creating the first fully digitally animated movie, Final Fantasy, and some of the associated challenges.

Gulf Times spoke to Khan at the event, where he expressed his excitement at the future of technology and highlighted the importance of the younger generation in developing new content and forming the next wave of ideas to revolutionise the world.

“The minds which shape the way the world moves are getting younger all the times,” he said, “and I truly believe that the next wave of change will come from people younger than us.”

“I also expect many new ideas to come from this part of the world as they can look at things with a fresh perspective,” he added.

Khan said that he had been delighted to find such an interest in gaming and animation in Qatar, and said that he was particularly pleased to find that local women seem especially talented in this area.

He suggested that their creativity offers them a level of exposure and attention that they may not otherwise receive, and he said he is looking forward to seeing this creativity develop in the gaming industry in the future.

As technology changes on an almost daily basis, Khan argued that every designer has a responsibility to keep updated with the latest innovations. And while that makes certain aspects of distinguishing oneself difficult, the designer suggested that it is content which sets apart the best from the rest.

Content, and passion, and he argued that for anybody lacking the necessary commitment and passion for computer graphics should be looking for another field of work.

Khan is obviously passionate about his work, and he has achieved much throughout his career.

From his experience he believes that although talent and technology are essential for success in the field of computer graphics and animation, they are not sufficient.

The extra essential ingredients are tolerance and teamwork, and having been a member of many large teams, Khan understands the challenges associated with the ‘too many cooks’ proverb and highlighted the importance of communication at all times.

Despite his numerous achievements, Khan continues to look forward, and is extremely excited about what the future will bring to this field.

Interactive movies are a prospect which could be realised soon, offering viewers the chance to participate in what they watch on the big screen and effect the outcome of the story as it unfolds.

Indeed, gaming has already become very close to interactive film, with gamers often playing roles in their own narrative throughout the course of a game.

He suggested that computer will be obsolete in the not too distant future, and said that the most advanced technological developments taking place at the moment will become almost run-of-the-mill in 18 months.

Khan said that he hopes to see more content being developed here and in the rest of the region, arguing that it is an effective way of promoting cultural understanding and preserving heritage among a younger generation.

Having seen what this designer has achieved and understanding the technology behind his line of work, his excitement and enthusiasm is entirely understandable.
Why did you choose to study design?
Since childhood I used to draw a lot and play with different mediums, from acrylic to water colours to oil paints. In ninth grade, I had the opportunity to participate in a world poster competition and my painting was one of the ten selected in Geneva. In tenth grade, I secured the first position in Karachi’s inter-school painting competition.

My father and my mother’s brothers were calligraphers. So I studied Nastaliq. It was wonderful to be able to observe the rigorous ethics required to create something. I explored different materials as well such as copper, plastic, brass, etc.

However, I had to switch back and forth because I was really into technology too. I would go to different electronic shops in Saddar or Lasbela and to anybody who could teach me about circuit analysis or new electronic kits. Every 14th August I used to have something to display – like an installation.

I had one set of friends who were completely into electronics and another group which was into creative media. So fortunately I had very good company, doing productive work, which taught me a lot about different aspects of life. The dominant part of my life is and was creativity.

Then somebody told me there was a competition in one of the technical schools, somewhere in Nazimabad, selecting only 7 students for National College of Arts. I gave the test and then the interview. I applied for architecture although they told me that I was more of a designer. But because of peer pressure, lack of awareness and other variables, I decided to study architecture.

Once in Lahore, however, I realised I was more towards colours and mediums. And that design is the field for me.

So why did you focus on visual effects in motion pictures?
It was 1988 and there was a lot of turmoil in the country. I realised that I couldn’t make art in this beautiful city (Lahore) due to the situation and I had to move on. So I came back to Karachi and then later went to Ohio State University where I studied Interior Design under the umbrella of Industrial Design. Our focus was on retail design, hospitals, clinics to inmate facilities, that is, commercial environments. Then I also worked on graphics related to the design of cockpits, dashboards of cars, etc.

During my first year there, I realised that I wanted to be a designer with muscles; combine design thinking with digital technology. I was part of a team of students who worked with a software development company. I used to sneak into their labs, keep a sleeping bag with me and spend days and nights there as this kind of work involves great commitment.

In second year I decided that computer graphics with the creative industry, probably animation, was my goal. I had already touched upon these things while still school so it wasn’t something completely new.

In third or fourth year I applied for my graduate programme. There were only nine students who were selected from all over the world to study at ACCAD (Advanced Computing Center for Arts & Design) at Ohio State University. It was an open competition and highly competitive. The faculty and staff was highly motivated and associated with Hollywood. Luckily, I was selected and it had an amazing educational setup. Individualism was nurtured within an environment of collaboration of highly technical and creative people.

How did you get a break in Hollywood?
A week before my graduation (MA in Industrial Design, with specialization in computer

‘Combine design thinking with digital technology’

Muqeem Khan has worked as a visual effects artist for Walt Disney and Final Fantasy. Currently he is Visiting Associate Professor at Northwestern University in Qatar and also makes animated films.

In an interview with Ayesha Hoda, Muqeem discusses his projects, interactive technologies and the future of animation/design.

Muqeem Khan
has worked as a visual effects artist for Walt Disney and Final Fantasy. Currently he is Visiting Associate Professor at Northwestern University in Qatar and also makes animated films. In an interview with Ayesha Hoda, Muqeem discusses his projects, interactive technologies and the future of animation/design.
Can Muqeem Khan go wrong?

That an audience controlled cinema on its way. Between gaming and video, he says the gap will narrow down in a few years. Cinemagoers will be able take on villains, rescue the needy and the distressed or even play the hero. The future of technology lies on the interactive interphase.

Interactive films are closer than you think, he says. “Gaming has already come close to these kinds of films with gamers being able to have physical presence throughout the course of game. The same will happen in cinema too.”

“It will be faster than you think. The digital revolution is happening at the blink of an eye. Think of Google glasses. I feel it’s a fantastic invention that uses augmented reality. We will use a lot of that too in future.” He feels that the latest technology of today will cease to have any attention in a span of one-and-half years.

Khan is excited at what the technological revolution could do to the world. At the same time, the academician within Khan is anxious about the future youngsters. He highlighted the importance of the younger generation in developing new content and forming the next wave of ideas to revolutionise the world. “The thoughts which profile the tactics with which the world moves are getting younger all the times, and I truly believe that the next upsurge of amendment will come from people younger than us,” he said.

Khan also expects the future belongs to this part of the world, the Middle East. “We have fresh ideas with new outlook and there is no holding back of perspectives. The younger generation is keen to showcase their thoughts, emotions and dreams.” He is positive and is surprised at the number of female students in his class. “I believe that the girls in this country are amazingly creative. They can carve their tales beyond all cultural taboos and inhibitions.” That’s typical of a generation that was bought up watching Japanese animations along with the world favourite Tom and Jerry.

“The Qatari girls tend to reflect the inter-

THE CREATIVE PHILOSOPHIES OF THE KHAN-DOM

“Film” is an amazing collage of condensed or stretched time. “Arts and design” are organized visual thoughts in a static or dynamic form. Their boundaries are extremely porous. One could be more inclined towards emotionalism “art” and the other could be more expressive of pragmatism “design”; and it is a purposeful, systematic and creative activity. An “art” is an expression, self-realization or interpretation of the surrounding. It is screaming in an abstract manner.

“Music” is an organized way of feeling an auditory sense. It is a predictable and pleasurable activity for auditory senses. This concept is more explanatory in the context of rhythm where we could predict a well-defined pattern and maybe as fast as a nanosecond. Possibly this µ nano-recognition satisfies human desire to predict the future. Hence music may be called an “Auditory Nano-Recognition.”

“Technology” is a ubiquitous transporter of human evolution.
play of customary ethos, Western avant-gardism and changes brought about by emerging affairs of today. By acquiring the technicalities, the youngsters are quietly conceptualizing their deep rooted tales through dynamic visuals. Khan is teaching everything to his students and dreaming of more vigorous original content being developed from this region. It is an effective technique of stimulating cultural appreciation and preserving heritage among a younger generation. Several films by his female students had won awards at the third Doha Tribeca Film Festival.

Khan had given a TED talk in Doha on his inventions in 2012, a talk that is bound to enhance your eagerness. He talks of ways to promote indigenous art forms. He states fresh playful and impressively innovative ways of working with graphics so that the younger tradition holds on to the cultural pedigrees.

Khan’s inventions were used in movies for more than a decade. He has had a glorious past that will make any graphic specialist envy him. He had worked at the Walt Disney as a visual effect artist for almost a decade. Khan’s motion picture credits with Walt Disney as well as Square USA are Deep Rising, George of the Jungle, Flubber, Armageddon and Final Fantasy.

If you remember Final Fantasy was the first fully digitally animated movie in the world. Watching a digital explosion or a digital breeze looks very simple on a screen. “The technicalities behind that are extremely complicated. There is a lot of turmoil to achieve perfection.”

“One has to decentralise the principles of visual effects, production pipelines, talent and technology for motion pictures and supplementary subjects correlated to visual thinking to see how imaginative and entrepreneurial attitude embraces technical and artistic thinking in the business of animation and filmmaking.”

“The key feature to cast photorealistic digital humans was not only an alliance between talent and technology, but also a critical application to drill concerns related to visual thinking and diversified perceptual skills from various illustrators, designers, systems analysts and specialists from all over the world.”

Khan is himself exploring intangible cultural heritage, animation and interaction in his PhD studies. He believes that it is the duty of every designer to keep him in par with the innovative technologies. “When talent and technology are blended with immense passion, you can excel in computer graphics and animation;” he says. “It’s also important to communicate with your team at all times because creativity is hard to explain in words. Also, accepting others creative works is vital.” The tech world is pacing ahead and it’s hard to imagine what’s next. Let’s wait and see. Maybe we will be able to watch a movie in various ways through interactive interphase.

And about Muqeem Khan - he is a poet, an animator, computer freak, a lover of culture to name a few. He is a frequent presenter and speaker on visual effects in motion pictures, animation and technologies in Qatar. If you want to know more, pass by North Western University and you’ll find him roaming around with seamless enthusiasm. For a long time after your chat, you will fantasise about the future of what technological brilliance would do to the world in the coming years.
houses you work as a team to achieve a single goal; sometimes tasks become repetitive and you don’t get as much freedom to explore your own ideas. So I began teaching and working on freelance/personal projects. I have been teaching third and fourth year Graphic Design Studio, Portfolio Design to 4th year, 2D and 3D animation, foundation for Interior Design, related to creating narrative, etc. Currently, I am a Visiting Associate Professor at Northwestern University in Qatar. It is my honour to interact with an amazing group of researchers and scholars, hailing from motion pictures to broadcast industries, media and technologies. Most of my students are Arabs and they have this tendency to tell stories in an amazing manner. My experience with them has been very positive. I have seen them produce highly creative ideas. Northwestern University’s environment is highly conducive to research and personal development. You are exploring Intangible Cultural Heritage, Animation, Interaction Design and Mixed Reality Environments through your PhD studies. Elaborate. My PhD research related to interactive technology was part of Doha Film Festival 2010. Now I am more towards interactive narrative, emerging technologies and processes. I firmly believe that in the future motion pictures will have positive. I have seen them produce highly creative ideas. Northwestern University’s environment is highly conducive to research and personal development. You are exploring Intangible Cultural Heritage, Animation, Interaction Design and Mixed Reality Environments through your PhD studies. Elaborate. My PhD research related to interactive technology was part of Doha Film Festival 2010. Now I am more towards interactive narrative, emerging technologies and processes. I firmly believe that in the future motion pictures will have
"Computer graphics is a platform through which I seek to sort out my thoughts"

– Muqeeem Khan

Computer graphics designer and animator

By Jamil Husain

Q: What drew you towards a career in computer graphics and 3D animation? How long has the desire to pursue work in animation been with you?

A: Art, design and calligraphy has been in my family. My uncles were artists, designers and calligraphers and my father, who was a herbalist, was also a very polished calligrapher. Since childhood, I had been exploring different materials – I would draw a lot, design and explore different media. I don't think that I found computer graphics and then began to express myself. Rather, the expression was there; in computer graphics I found another medium or platform for that expression.

Q: Would you say that your decision to pursue computer graphics and animation was related to an ‘all for the money’ ideology?

A: If you desire money and hope that this platform will get it for you, then that’s just a bad attitude. You should enjoy your work; having fun with your activity is the most important thing. It is what brings you happiness and satisfaction. Money is just one of the variables that come with your work.

Q: What are your views on computer graphics?

A: Computer design [or graphics], like arts, music and poetry, is an organised way of looking at the world. They all try to give meaning to our lives and become a source of happiness for us.

Q: Do you see potential for the arts or computer graphics industry to flourish in Pakistan?

A: I am very optimistic of our arts and design. We have inherited a strong visual culture from the Hindus and Persians. If we can integrate these influences in our work, amazing things can happen. But at the moment, we just seem to be importing our thoughts. We are not leaders; to be leaders we need guts, which calls for giving others direction rather than following them.

Q: As an assistant professor at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, how do you teach your material to students?

A: The most important thing in my classroom is motivation and curiosity. Once you create curiosity, enthusiasm follows, and then comes motivation. Motivation automatically heads in the direction of creating something tangible. When you design methodology to create curiosity, you teach one how to learn rather than what to learn, and this creates satisfaction.

Q: It seems then that you are touched by philosophical messages. On your website, you have listed several poems for comprehending existence and life in general. How influenced are you by poetry, or a philosophical outlook on life?

A: Poetry is a really interesting area where you collect different words and try to compose and say in very short sentences something bold and interesting. Computer graphics is a platform, like poetry, through which I seek to sort out my thoughts. I don't
try to find answers to my confusion. I think it's better to be in a state of confusion for your own personal development -- it's very healthy. Poetry is a manifestation of my confusion, or the output of my confusion.

Q: Is there a message you want to spread through your work?

A: My '7 planets' animation on my website is all about the destruction of our planet Earth. It’s about global warming and interaction with mother Earth. It’s another platform on which I like to craft these messages, and if we gear our social structure in some direction, good things will come from it.

Q: Moving on to your participation in film production, what was your role in the films you worked in?

A: Basically, I was responsible for dust, debris, clouds, fire, body defamation, and for creating those sorts of things.

Q: Were you at all concerned with the content of the script, or the philosophical messages of the films? I ask this because each of the movies you worked on contained very deep philosophical messages and analysis of society.

A: You have to know the plot and script because even if you are working on one shot, you have another shot to link it with, so you have to be really familiar with the content. Hollywood movies are very structured, every shot is structured. When it comes to artists like me, we know exactly what we need to be doing -- which is to put effort into showing our creativity in a tangible manner. For instance, when I was working on Final Fantasy, I was touched by how important it was for Sakaguchi-san, [to give] reality to his dream. And when working on it, I was more focused on the representation of those things.

My concern was not to change the script, my job was to portray the concept in the best way I could.

Q: Which film was your favourite, or the most rewarding one to work on?

A: Final Fantasy was a very interesting project where for three years all us artists worked together and collaborated on the project, constantly challenging ourselves in the process. I learnt a lot being a part of the production house. Collective effort is the most important thing in any production house.

Q: Did you draw from the environment, in Hawaii and elsewhere?

A: Yes, there were several shots for which I had to. For George of the Jungle, I played in the mud and debris to see how they would interact with my feet, because that is how it would be depicted in my work.

Q: Have you gotten any other offers to work with films produced for Hollywood?

A: Final Fantasy was my last offer. I am currently working on a project for my website called 'Masks.' Also, I am researching with a research club to detect facial expressions and face actions of early autistic individuals. We are trying to come up with an application to detect early autism. This is something I am heavily involved in at the moment.

Q: Is there any likelihood of you pursuing independent film projects, perhaps those native to or based in Pakistan?

A: Yes, but rather than an independent project, I would like to do some collaborative work.

Q: What advice can you give to those aspiring for a career in computer graphics and animation?

A: Curiosity is the most important thing. The essence of everything is curiosity, and you have to have fun with your work. Create tangible and pragmatic goals for yourself. Ghalib said something, which is pretty hard to translate, but the gist of it is: it is not the wood of the flute, but rather the heart of the flute player that creates the sound. You constantly evaluate from your mind, but your work should come from your heart, and you have this tangible push and pull between those two. You have to learn how to attach and detach from your work, and that is important. When you detach, you can start thinking pragmatically, and when you attach, you can place your emotions in your work.

Amazing things are happening, not only in graphic design, but in filmmaking, animation and computer graphics. If you can sit and work for long hours in front of a rectangular screen and enjoy it, you might as well try it.
The sky is the limit

By M. Khalid Rahman

The time is not far when we would be able to smell fragrance through a computer. We could also sense the wind in our hair, the waves, feel the moisture and smell the sea, finding ourselves in a house while watching a movie.

Face to face

“By visual effects or special effects, we mean manipulation of images through the use of computer, and film itself is a process by which we produce special effects,” he explains. The taste of our, pause, many of whom have seen shows that he has created in such self-help films as Poetic Fantasy. About Poetic Fantasy and its making, he says: “It’s a combined mapping for the new era of visual effects and computer graphics. In today’s television and film industry, image making is the result of a combination of many effects. The audience expects the highest level of expected realism and run the show.”

During the production of this movie, major achievements in computer graphics were achieved. It is a film that was shown at the Cannes Film Festival and also at the New York Film Festival. The audience expects the highest level of expected realism and run the show.”

The movie was shot in a total of 200 scenes, using about 800 computer-generated images. The total budget of the movie was $2 million, which was supported by a combination of government and private funds.

The story is about a boy who dreams of flying to the moon. He is helped by his friend, a computer generated character called “Poetic Fantasy.” The boy learns to control the computer, and together they create a virtual world.

In the story, the boy learns how to control the computer and how to create virtual worlds. The story is about the power of imagination and how it can be used to create something new.

The movie’s success can be measured by the number of views it received and the number of people who were impressed by the story. The story is about the power of imagination and how it can be used to create something new.

The story is about the power of imagination and how it can be used to create something new.
Shah Rukh battling with aliens in space?
Meet the man who could make it happen

HOLLYWOOD'S TOP SPECIAL EFFECTS WHIZ MUQEEM KHAN ON THE FUTURE OF BOLLYWOOD

THE ASJAD NAZIR INTERVIEW

‘It won't be too long before someone like the late Hari Kapoor is resurrected on the big screen.’
Do you ever wonder who was behind the special effects in *Final Fantasy*, *George of the Jungle*, *Armageddon*, *Flubber* and *Deep Rising*?

Young aspiring directors from Pakistan can now take inspiration from the success of a fellow compatriot, Muqeeem Khan — the first Pakistani digital effects artist in Hollywood. Working on what, for Pakistani artists, is still an unconventional palette, Khan’s day work involves creating computer-generated images and special effects for all our favourite Hollywood blockbusters.

Speaking at the The Indus Entrepreneurs (TIE) Networking Meeting held recently in Pakistan, Muqeeem Khan extolled on his personal experiences in the oft-overlooked field of special effects and animation, disseminating vital information on the linked career opportunities available in our country. Brought up in an artistic environment, with the backing of his calligrapher father and uncle, Muqeeem had always felt a natural inclination towards the creative arts. It was only many years later at college, where he was studying engineering and architecture, that he stumbled across his true calling – digital art. “I knew this was destined to lead to great things,” he says. His passion led him to enrol in various courses specialising in artistic technology. His zeal paid off: few years later, Muqeeem started work at Square USA, followed by stints with Honolulu Studio and Dream Quest Images. At the moment, he is Assistant Professor of Digital Design at the American University of Sharjah, UAE.

As a special effects artist in *Final Fantasy*, Muqeeem was responsible for creating natural phenomena. “I was entrusted to make the film seem as realistic as I could,” he says. When asked about what the future foretold for computerised images, Muqeeem asserts that the possibilities were endless. “With the advent of advanced techniques, it will one day become possible for an audience to view the character in a way they see real humans,” he predicts.

**FANTASY MAN**

How far does Pakistan lag behind in the field? Muqeeem is clearly optimistic. “What we lack in technology we make up for in creativity. It’s only a matter of time,” says Muqeeem. Well, for the moment at least, Muqeeem Khan has clearly hit the big time.

— Sara Mahmood
About Mr. Khan

Mr. Khan is an artist known for his work in animation. He has worked on several major projects in Hollywood and has received critical acclaim for his contributions to the industry. His latest project, "The Adventure of Prudence," has been备受期待, and it is set to release soon.

In the interview, Mr. Khan spoke about his journey into animation, his inspirations, and his plans for the future. He also shared insights into the animation industry, the role of technology, and the importance of storytelling. Read on to learn more about Mr. Khan and his work.

Mugam-i-Maan

A Pakistani digital animation artist who made it big in Hollywood

An interview with

By S. Faizan

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Mugam-i-Maan

A Pakistani digital animation artist who made it big in Hollywood

An interview with

By S. Faizan
What is computer graphics and how has it been used in the realm of design?

Wall: Art graphics or visual representations created or manipulated by computers are called computer graphics. The history goes back to 1961 when people in Australia invented a computer graphics system. Since then, computer graphics have been incorporated into virtually every aspect of our lives. For instance, they are used in the automotive industry, architecture, entertainment, and even healthcare.

How did you get your break into working in this field?

Wall: It happened by pure chance. I discovered computer graphics during my graduate studies in design and was immediately drawn to the potential of using these tools to create stunning visual effects. At that time, there were very few professionals working in this field, and I was able to make my mark early on.

What are your favourite design and animation tools and why?

Wall: My favourite tools include Maya, 3D Studio Max, and After Effects. These tools are powerful and versatile, allowing me to create realistic visual effects that are both convincing and engaging. I also love using Adobe Photoshop for compositing and animation. It's a great tool for creating visual effects that enhance the overall production quality.

What is difference between computer-assisted and computer-generated animation?

Wall: Computer-assisted animation is used to create animations that are based on existing models or simulations. These models can be created using software tools or physical prototypes. Computer-generated animation, on the other hand, involves creating entirely new models or simulations using software tools. This allows for greater control and creativity in the animation process.

How do you stay updated with the latest trends and developments in the field?

Wall: I attend conferences, workshops, and seminars to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and developments in the field. I also follow industry news and publications to keep abreast of new technologies and techniques. Additionally, I maintain a keen eye on up-and-coming artists and designers who are pushing the boundaries of the field.

What advice do you have for young designers who are just starting out?

Wall: My advice to young designers is to be persistent and determined. It's important to stay focused on your goals and continue to work hard, even when faced with challenges. Also, don't be afraid to take risks and experiment with new ideas. The design and animation industry is constantly evolving, and those who are willing to adapt and learn are better equipped to succeed.

Mushroom Khan, a Pakistani digital designer and animation artist, has worked for Hollywood creations such as visual effects artist in Virtual Computing Company in Qatar (VCCQ). Khan received his Master of Arts in Industrial Design in 1996 with specialization in computer graphics and animation from Advanced Computing Center for Arts and Design (ACCAD) and Department of Industrial, Interior, and Visual Communication at Ohio State University, Columbus, Ohio. He also obtained his Bachelor of Science in Industrial Design from the same university in 1994. Since then, Khan's research interests include teaching methodology, collaborative activity across multiple disciplines, and computer graphic tools for artists and designers. His previous picture credits, as a visual effects artist with Walt Disney Deep Rising, George of the Jungle, Flubber and Armageddon. After Wall Disney Company he worked for Square USA in Honolulu, Hawaii, for the motion picture Pixel Fantasy, The Spirits Within, the first full-length feature with a cast made up of static, pixelated humans. Khan recently gave a presentation entitled ‘Collaboration at the Petra Rocks Night’ held at the Wing Art Centre, Speaking in Qatar Tribune’s A.K. M. Suhail Khan spoke about his passion for digital animation. 

Interview

What is computer graphics and how has it been used in the realm of design?

Wall: Art graphics or visual representations created or manipulated by computers are called computer graphics. The history goes back to 1961 when people in Australia invented a computer graphics system. Since then, computer graphics have been incorporated into virtually every aspect of our lives. For instance, they are used in the automotive industry, architecture, entertainment, and even healthcare.

How did you get your break into working in this field?

Wall: It happened by pure chance. I discovered computer graphics during my graduate studies in design and was immediately drawn to the potential of using these tools to create stunning visual effects. At that time, there were very few professionals working in this field, and I was able to make my mark early on.

What are your favourite design and animation tools and why?

Wall: My favourite tools include Maya, 3D Studio Max, and After Effects. These tools are powerful and versatile, allowing me to create realistic visual effects that are both convincing and engaging. I also love using Adobe Photoshop for compositing and animation. It's a great tool for creating visual effects that enhance the overall production quality.

What is difference between computer-assisted and computer-generated animation?

Wall: Computer-assisted animation is used to create animations that are based on existing models or simulations. These models can be created using software tools or physical prototypes. Computer-generated animation, on the other hand, involves creating entirely new models or simulations using software tools. This allows for greater control and creativity in the animation process.

How do you stay updated with the latest trends and developments in the field?

Wall: I attend conferences, workshops, and seminars to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and developments in the field. I also follow industry news and publications to keep abreast of new technologies and techniques. Additionally, I maintain a keen eye on up-and-coming artists and designers who are pushing the boundaries of the field.

What advice do you have for young designers who are just starting out?

Wall: My advice to young designers is to be persistent and determined. It's important to stay focused on your goals and continue to work hard, even when faced with challenges. Also, don't be afraid to take risks and experiment with new ideas. The design and animation industry is constantly evolving, and those who are willing to adapt and learn are better equipped to succeed.
A digital designer, academi-
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tive professional, Musharraf Khan is all rolled into one.

An associate professor at Northwestern University in Qatar and a director of the Digital Arts Program, Khan has been married to a Hollywood actress for five years. The couple now live in bulldozer-called Doha. A family man, Khan believes that pretty soon, a holographic version of his wife will be part of their household.


"I am a digital artist," Khan replied when asked about his profession.

"When I go to the market, I can see the newest digital technology and I can tell that it is not only a treat for your palate. The dishes have been selected and prepared according to your taste and prepared right before your eyes. We have delectable curries, clay oven baking, for the first time in Doha a genuine refinement and good taste.

"Zaoq Restaurant is an outcome of region's cuisine," said Hussain. "Our chefs and the rest of the staff are always used to have a delectable hobby, my keyboard when working.

Each recipe can be moulded and prepared. Set is a charming and warm atmosphere. For events and press releases contact LN Mallick by email at qatar.editor@gmail.com or call (974) 44422077.

"Within assignment was to join Disney, he worked for the company in Delaware, Ohio and Orleans and took my show reel to an interview at Walt Disney in New Orleans. Eventually, I was decided and had a break in Hollywood," Khan said. "A flexible mentality had played a big role in my decision. With this mentality, I try to learn anything and every-
thing I can. It is just amazing avenues in front of me. So please don't hesitate in experi-
encing which is not only a treat for your palate. The dishes have been selected

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VIRTUAL ARDAH & FUTURE OF ANIMATION

His idea of creating a virtual version of the traditional Arabic sword dance Arda has recently been awarded a $1.05 million National Science Foundation Research Program (NPRP) grant from Qatar National Research Fund (QNRF).}

Muhammed Khan Munir, 13-year-old daughter of his father, got into educational and gaming environment.

Muhammed Khan’s concept of a virtual and augmented environment for this purpose was to create an immersive experience for the children to understand and appreciate the beauty of the traditional Arabic sword dance. The augmented environment would include visual effects, sound, and interactive elements that would captivate the children’s attention and engage them in a learning experience.

What about the future?

He believes that the augmented reality technology will have a significant impact on the future of entertainment and education. With the integration of 5G technology and cloud computing, the augmented reality environment can become more realistic and interactive, providing a more immersive experience for users.

Towards a better future...

Muhammed Khan’s vision is to create an augmented reality environment that not only entertains but also educates and inspires the younger generation. He believes that technology has the power to transform the way we learn and experience the world, and he is excited to see where this journey will take him.

In conclusion, Muhammed Khan’s passion and dedication to creating a virtual and augmented reality environment for the traditional Arabic sword dance is a testament to the power of technology in promoting cultural preservation and education. His vision is not only to create an entertaining experience but also to inspire the younger generation to explore and appreciate the beauty of traditional Arabic culture.

*This story was contributed by the Arab Media Foundation.*

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*This story was contributed by the Arab Media Foundation.*
Muqeem Khan, who has been involved with digital animation in Hollywood, believes dreams can turn to reality

People tend to dream in colours, geometrical shapes and swirling forms. He imagines in animation and spends hours blending reality with digital imagery.

Muqeem Khan is currently assistant professor of digital design at the School of Architecture and Design at the American University of Sharjah. Prior to his teaching stint, he was working on digital animation and special effects with top companies in the West such as Disney. His resume includes George Of the Jungle, Armageddon, Flubber and Final Fantasy: The Spirits
He spoke to Gulf News about believing in your dreams and following through on them.

Khan said: "As a teenager, I was given an archaic computer. It was quite primitive, but opened up a whole new world for me.

"I was very interested in mathematics. One day, a friend requested me to create a kind of animation start to a documentary. I took it up as a challenge and learnt the basic language, wrote some simple programmes. I managed to create some graphics.

"It was incredible, I could spend hours, days and months on the machine... didn't need any contact with the outside world. However, after I completed the project, we could not transfer it from the computer, so we videotaped it from the screen.

"That's when I realised there is more to it than just creating graphics, there's a whole science to it."

The 15-year-old was fascinated and hooked by the field of computer graphics. However, there were not many avenues for him to explore in Karachi, Pakistan. He went on to study architecture at the National College of Art in Lahore. After his first year, he got admission into the undergraduate course at Ohio University in the U.S.

"At the university, they had an advanced computing centre. I had found my answer and I joined," he said. He completed his master's programme from the same university in computer graphics. It was 1996.
The same year, Disney acquired a new production house DreamQuest Images, which had been responsible for films such as *Total Recall* and *Abyss*. I was job hunting a few weeks prior to graduation at a convention in New Orleans. They told me DreamQuest was looking for creative artistes for a new Disney film.

"I applied, got called to Los Angeles and was given a job. It was incredible, straight out of school, I was being given an opportunity to work with top level professionals from the field. The film was *George Of the Jungle.*"

His assignment was "the interaction of a digital elephant's feet with the ground". When an animal of a huge size walks, it casts a certain type of shadow, debris fly around near the feet, dust rises and changes occur on the ground.

"It may sound extremely simple, but is quite complex in the detailing. It is done digitally, but has to appear real. We shot live footage on elephants in Hawaii and worked with them.

"The assignment lasted for around for four months. This was then followed by *Flubber*, the Robin Williams starrer. I had to work on creating clouds and wisps that interact with the star's car, when he flies through the sky.

"It required around a month of research and development. When you work on this kind of virtual reality, the audience should not be able to discern that it isn't the real thing.

"On a movie screen, everything is magnified, including the special effects. A small thing going wrong is immediately detectable. Special effects using computer graphics is to enhance the movie experience not present bad quality."

Close on the heels of Flubber, was the Michael Bay film Armageddon featuring Bruce Willis and Ben Affleck. "I was responsible for the initial explosion shown in the film," he said.

"We had to show an explosion taking place on a surface like the moon. We have no live footage of that. Another aspect is gravity and the absence of an atmosphere in space.

"So in case of an explosion how would the debris move. It was a combination of physics and art. You cannot adhere purely to science, for then the drama in an explosion might be absent.

"Ultimately it's a film and drama has to be present. Everything has to tell a story."

After the multi-million dollar production, Khan heard of a new Japanese company Square USA, set up by Hironobu Sakaguchi in Hawaii.

"They were working with cutting edge technology, creating the film Final Fantasy: The Spirits Within, which is a full-length digital feature. However, the characters and everything look real, so we had work very hard to create an amalgam of animation and reality.

"The film wasn't a big hit, primarily because of the script."
However, in terms of technology it was a pioneer. The learning curve was steep."

By now, Khan had worked in the industry at the top level for over four years.

He decided to teach, in a bid to share his experiences with students. He received an excellent offer from the American University of Sharjah, this was over a year ago. What do his future plans include?

"I don't know. I live on a day-to-day basis, although, I do believe in finding your true interests and pursuing it to the end. That is something I advise my students - follow your heart and dream."

Article continues below

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Digital age in Pakistan not a distant dream

Tuesday, January 27, 2009
By Faryal Rajaeb

Karachi

Former animator at the Walt Disney Company and Assistant Professor at Virginia Commonwealth University in Qatar, Mueem Khan, believes that the dream of a digital age in Pakistan is not far-fetched. He believes that the local industry will soon get into stride as Pakistan has the talent and the will to learn but the need for guidance.

The animator, who has worked for projects such as Armageddon and George of the Jungle, was recently in Karachi to visit his family. "The youth of this country should start with low budget projects which would deliver the goods in the end," he said while taking exclusively to The News. Obstacles such as the lack of computer literacy and opportunities amongst the people are being overcome eventually as people become sources digitally, he asserted.

There are some great institutes in Pakistan that specialize in digital art, while decreasing the price of hardware is also helping the development of technology. For instance, "The images I created on marchines worth US$40,000 ten years ago, are now also possible with simple software such as Adobe," he commented. Khan stressed that designers from Pakistan need to develop their own digital language, which could make Pakistani markets appealing for international projects and funds. Khan cited the example of Japan which has its own digital language and hence the country is successful in the field of animation and technology.

However, he emphasised, "Before we achieve anything, a goal must be realised." Explaining further, Khan said, "Team work and a change of mindset are essential for success." In the West, people are eager to teach, he added, "They want others to learn while in Pakistan everyone guards their knowledge jealously." He emphasised that sharing is extremely important and collective work is required for Pakistan in order to progress in the digital arena. "People are ready to share ideas and teach and all they need now is a platform."

Relating his journey from childhood to Walt Disney, Khan said that creativity runs in the family. He recalls that even as a child he was creative. Khan proved his mettle in 1978 when he assembled a clay stop made out of old circuits, in the sixth grade. Later, Khan joined the National College of Arts after completing his Intermediate but political turmoil following the assassination of Ziaul Haq in 1988 compelled him to leave Pakistan and move to Ohio, USA, where he was admitted in the Advance Computing Centre for Arts and Design at the Ohio State University. "Back then the department took just ten students from all over the world," he shared.

Khan got his big chance to work with the Walt Disney Company in 1997 when his department sent some students and faculty members to attend an exhibition where Disney was hiring for the making of George of the Jungle and Robin Hood. "I approached them but first they asked me to do something practically for them. They did not even look at my CV and that’s when I realised that these production companies want experience not college degrees," he said. Walt Disney approved of Mueem Khan and he has not looked back since then. His first project was George of the Jungle where he specifically worked on the elephant Shoo where he had to show the ground interaction between the character and reality. He then did camera tracking for Deep Rising, animations for Armageddon and animation work for Robin Hood and Final Fantasy.

Khan recalls that he never suffered discrimination because he was sincere and passionate about his work. The director of Deep Rising taught me that each shot is like a painting and you have to depict it in your own style. "Each animation binds the motion picture together while telling its own story and that is art," Khan commented on his vocation.

Khan worked for three years with Disney and then became a teacher. The artist now hopes to see Pakistan becoming a leader in the field of digital technology and visits various universities and institutes in Pakistan to disseminate his knowledge.
BY FAZEENA SALEEM

DOHA: The film education initiatives in Qatar mainly aim to mentor and develop Qatari and regional filmmakers as part of a cultural movement that supports voices, perspectives and stories from the Arab world.

To this end the Doha Film Institute (DFI) and the Northwestern University in Qatar are teaching filmmaking. They teach youth to become dynamic filmmakers and create a strong platform to build a Qatari film industry. The institutions have designed effective programmes for aspiring filmmakers that will prepare them to do work of international standards in all areas of filmmaking.

Since its inception, DFI has conducted some 70 workshops and trained more than 700 filmmakers in various aspects of filmmaking, including writing, directing, acting, animation, documentaries, stunt direction, script development, short filmmaking and film theory and mythology.

The communication programme at Northwestern University in Qatar teaches students through hands-on experience in media research and creative media arts. Students write film scripts, make movies, study the history of film exhibition and analyse the use of online communities in professional and social contexts. Students learn by doing so that they can become effective innovators in communication policy, management, and the creative media industries.

But what type of films should they make in future to create a successful industry in the country and is it possible to make a winning Qatari film?

If one thought the Qatari film industry was at a disadvantage because the audience was too small, one needs to think again. A leading filmmaker and academician believes that it is precisely the lack of a box-office audience that makes for greater freedom and innovation for Qatari creators. For one thing, future Qatari directors will not have the sort of market pressure that their Egyptian counterparts, who need to sell tickets at the box office in a big way, face.

“Qatar will never have a self-sustaining film industry built upon its dialect of Arabic. But this is a good thing, actually. They will not have the market pressures that Egypt faces, and they will consequently be more concerned about producing unique artistic visions that are not bound to any market forces,” said Professor Tim Wilkerson, assistant professor at Northwestern University in Qatar.

He says Maghribi films from Algeria and Morocco are more ground-breaking and innovative than their Egyptian counterparts because the Maghribi filmmakers are not overly fixated on making films that will sell tickets.

In his personal film work, Wilkerson has concentrated on short narrative, experimental and documentary projects. His most recent project has been purchased by Al Jazeera Documentary and International Channels for international satellite broadcast, and is a feature-length documentary about a 25-year-long, anti-nuclear peace vigil in front of the White House. With his wide experience in the industry, Wilkerson suggests that Qatari filmmakers in future should address international and television audiences in particular to foster a successful film industry here.

“Qatar does have a promising filmmaking future. Qatari filmmakers can focus on the international festival and television markets, and largely ignore box-office ticket sales. Having a return on the investors’ money will not be as much of an issue in this part of the world — at least for those who have invested in Gulf films. It will just be understood that there may not be a return on the investment,” he said.

“Those investors who wish to have a more solid return on their money can and will invest in Hollywood or Bollywood films.”

Academics also see a high potential for Qatari women getting involved in the film industry, as storytelling by them would reflect the interplay of traditional culture, Western modernism and changes brought about by emerging technologies.
Though the technology comes from outside sources, the concepts are quietly evolved among young women with fresh, genuine and contextually embedded ideas.

“I am extremely optimistic about their future and clearly see Qatari women taking some leadership role in filmmaking and animation,” said Muqeem Khan, Visiting Associate Professor at Northwestern University in Qatar.

“With the advanced channels of communication and ease of available technological tools, the young mind of Qatari women is ready to adopt forthcoming cutting edge challenges in filmmaking,” said Khan, who has been exploring intangible cultural heritage, animation and interaction in his PhD studies.

Young female Qatari film students are adopting and using technology as a vehicle to convey their ideas. Their work has culminated in dynamic visuals that celebrate, inform or create awareness about local issues.

“For sure these young women see new ways of transmission and transaction of the messages to their audiences. They feel bold as they are empowered and equipped with the necessary jargon in order to influence others with their dynamic digital images and messages,” said Khan.

Several short documentary films by his female students have been selected for screening at the third Doha Tribeca Film Festival.

The Head of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards General Mohammad Ali Jafari