

## "Wood embroidery"

A group of fourth-year students and I had heard about the traditional crafts heritage project and the professional courses being conducted at the Faculty of Architecture at Al-Baath University. We did not hesitate at all and rushed to register for the aforementioned courses held by professors, trainees, and craftsmen. The method of work was very interesting.

The outcome of what we learned is that original creativity is generated from the fusion of the art of engineering and the spirit of heritage. This was our goal from the beginning of our thinking about designing and implementing the paravan project, when my work-group colleagues and I, after several attempts and different ideas, decided to adopt a design that stems from the integration of the concepts of several traditional crafts, embroidery in a new style, wood hollowing-out with traditional geometric decoration in a contemporary style, drawing in an abstract style, using the modern CNC machine, and traditional tools such as needle, thread, feather, and color. Added to these was manufacturing the appropriate wooden frame and installing the paravan shutters using the appropriate hinges. All of these were done by making use of the equipment of the traditional craft laboratory – "Hands Laboratory".

**Layan Al- Drouby**



## "An experience we won't forget"

We had a unique workshop. Our aprons were smeared with clay kneaded by the hands of a young man and a craftsman. At first we were afraid that we would not succeed in producing a pottery vase. But the directions of the craftsman who participated in the professional course removed our fears.

A strange feeling overwhelmed us when we dealt with the clay dough, leaving our imagination free to create pottery pots of different shapes and sizes. A simple movement from a young man's hand together with a magic touch from a craftsman's finger yielded an inanimate masterpiece that is, nevertheless, a living being almost articulating a single sentence: "Thank you, craftsman. May God grant you a long life to teach the young -our future hope- how to create brothers for me."

Yes, that was it. We learned, worked, and created pottery pots from traditional clay using a modern machine and an electronic grilling oven, in the traditional crafts heritage workshop "Hands Laboratory".

**Ahmad Omran**



## “Really...we created this?!”

Under the supervision of our teachers, craftsmen, and architects, we learned; we thought; and we designed, but -oh my God- what did our hands make?! This is what our eyes, before our mouths, articulated.

Yes, our project, which was to design a presidential reception hall, was the pride of our product throughout our study years. It was an engineering thought derived from the spirit of heritage, investing in the capabilities and techniques of the era to produce walls, floors, ceilings, even furniture and furnishings, and all architectural elements and interior details of direct and indirect lighting. We tried to reach the stage where we could present a presidential reception hall that offers visiting delegations a clear and comprehensive idea which demonstrates the strength of our civilization and the beauty and authenticity of our heritage in a modern style.

My work-group colleagues and I will not forget the stages of design and its development, the stages of implementation by using the automatic engraving machine to design artistic wooden panels. This idea was difficult to achieve manually and takes a long time, knowing that it was mastered by Syrian craftsmen. We lived a dream come true that we are engineers, designers and implementers, albeit on a scale smaller than reality 1/5.

And the least I can say is ‘Thank you, “Hands”.’ **Wael Naser**



## "Arabic Calligraphy... Beauty and Function"

Our love of Arabic calligraphy, with all its kinds, was instilled in our conscience through the training courses held by the College of Architecture as part of the Hands Project activities, and that affected all our design ideas for cladding a column in a hall.

We adopted the Arabic calligraphy hollowed out in the wood planks for the surfaces of the column, and behind it the artificial lighting, so that the letters and phrases of the line appear through the hidden lighting. The result was paintings of Arabic calligraphy for the four faces of the central column. We did most of this with the equipment of traditional crafts laboratory –“Hands”. In doing so, the importance of understanding heritage, its crafts, and its vocabulary were rooted in us and in our colleagues, to be able to succeed in producing contemporary architecture that has a solid and sustainable base, which is heritage... **Mary Atieh**

