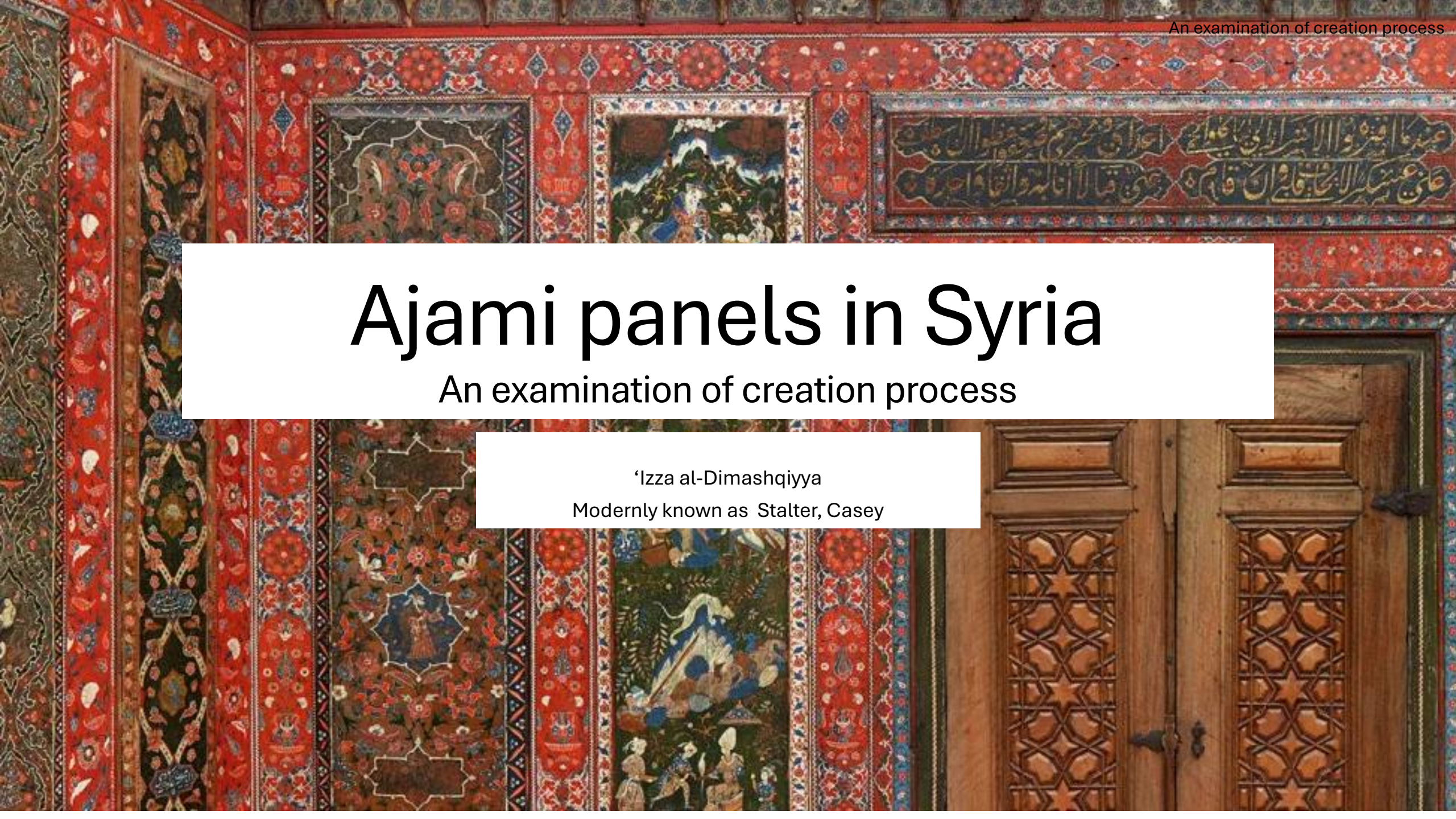


# Ajami panels in Syria

An examination of creation process

'Izza al-Dimashqiyya

Modernly known as Stalter, Casey



# Introduction

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- **Known as:** Khashabiyat madhuwna (painted wooden wall panels), Damascene paint (as some believe Damascus was the craft's origin), Painted Wood, and 'Ajami
- **What it is:** Wooden panels are elaborately decorated in a relief technique and applied to the walls and ceiling in a room to form a cohesive or complementary theme. Popular across much of Syria prior to the 18th century

# Materials

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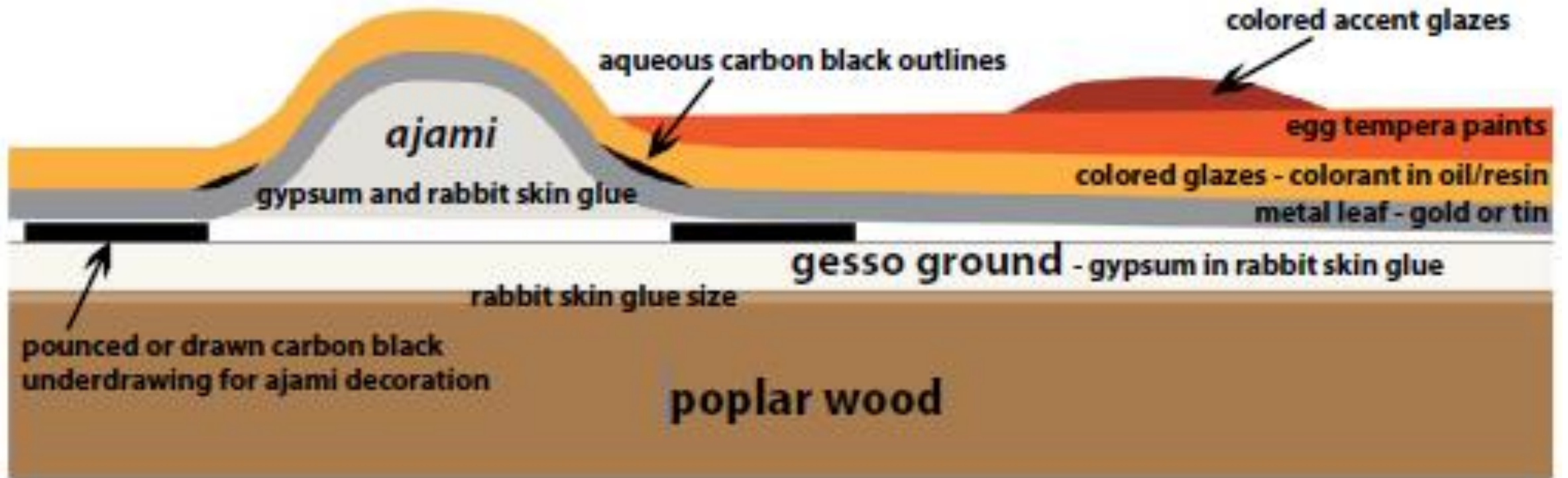
- Wooden Panel: Poplar, cypress, black mulberry, walnut, box tree wood, cedar, terebinth, and wood from the family Rubiaceae
- Gesso Ground: Hide/Skin glue & Gypsum powder
- Metal Leaf: Gold, Tin, Silver, and later copper
- Pigments
  - Blue: Indigo, Ultramarine, Smalt, Lapis Azul
  - Red: Minium, Cinnabar, Vermillion, red lead, Cochineal, Lac (often from cochineal)
  - Yellow: Orpiment, Aloe
  - Green: Verdigris, mixture of blue and yellow
  - Black: Ivory & Carbon black
  - White: lead white, calcium carbonite, gypsum

# Materials cont.

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- Binding Medium
  - Paint: Egg white (glair), Egg yoke (Tempura), Whole Egg
  - Glaze: Damar (Pine resin and turpentine) & Oil (likely linseed)

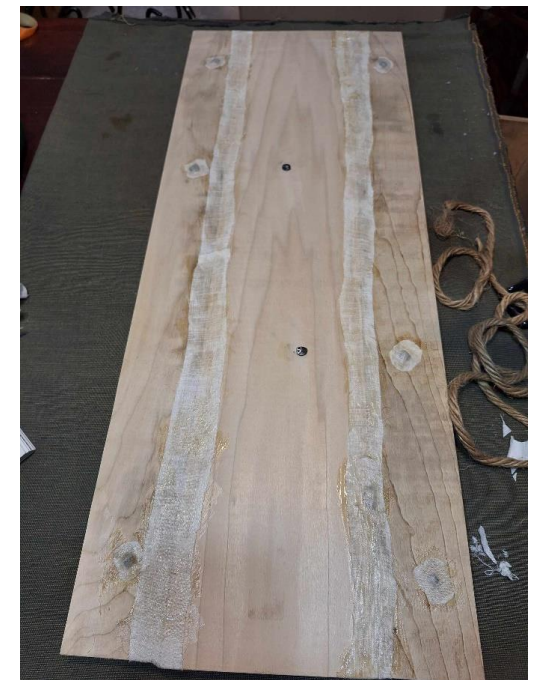
# Layers



# Panel Construction

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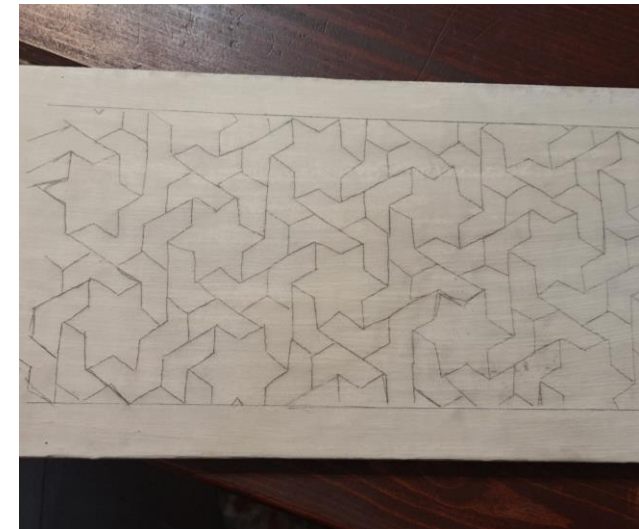
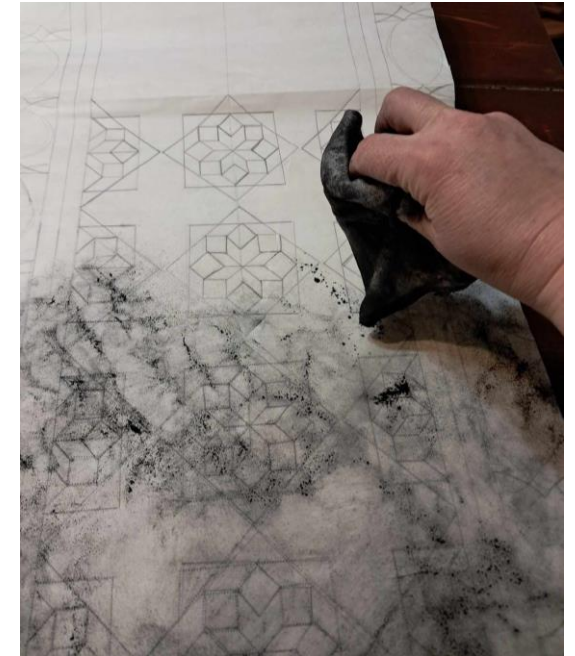
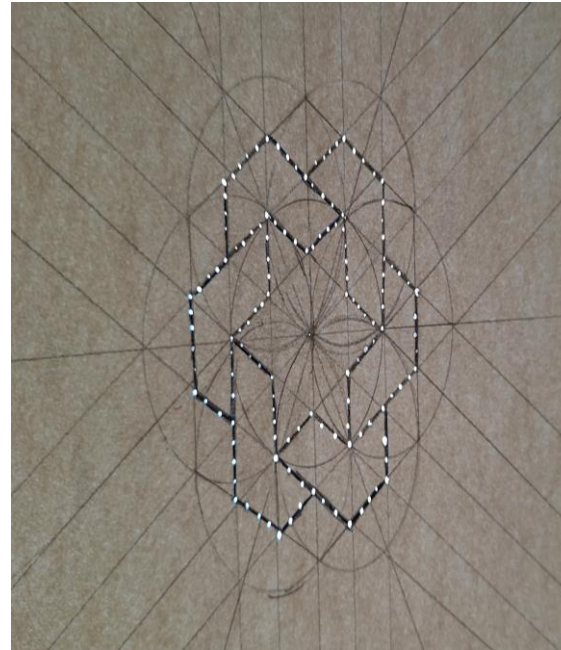
1. Thin boards applied to frame
2. Fill cracks & holes with hemp fiber and linen
3. Cover with multiple thin layers of Gesso ground (sanding between and after)



# Transfer Design

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1. Create template on paper
2. Punch holes along lines
3. Pounce design with charcoal transferring lines as needed



# Ajami Layer

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1. Prepare thick Ajami Paste
2. Paint over surfaces which should be raised

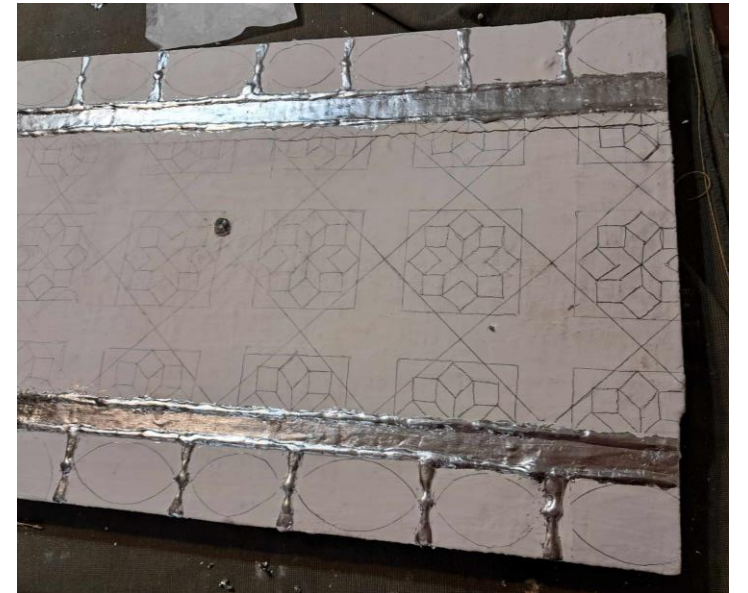




# Metal Foil Layer

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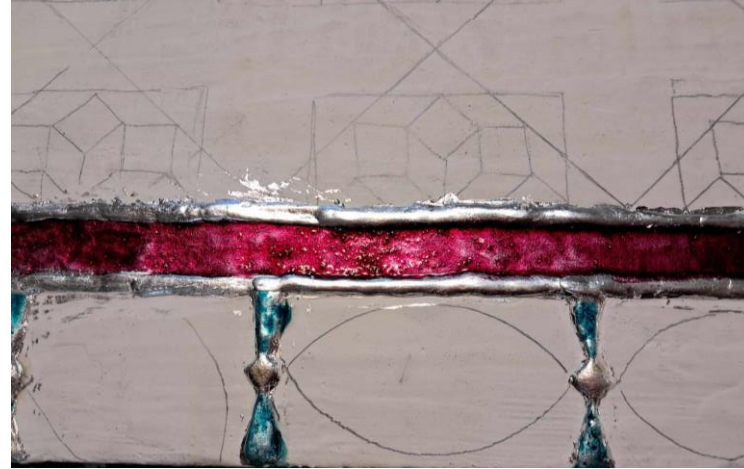
1. Apply thin layer skin glue to areas to foil
2. Carefully apply foil
3. Remove any excess foil when glue has dried



# Glazing & Painting

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1. Apply Glaze to raised or lowered areas and let dry completely
2. Apply Paint to large sections to form main design
3. Outline main designs
4. Apply detailed enhancements to all painted areas



# Conclusion

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- Requires knowledge of many different skills
- Many rooms have been lost
- Amount of research is sparse
- Syrian heritage museum is seeking to share knowledge before it is lost





