

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

26 February 2008

Transmitted by email: KenDusz@mac.com

Mr. Kenneth Paul Duszynski
U.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

Your email letter dated 18 December 2008 regarding the potential of your entering into a management agreement with an Israeli gallery for the sale of your artwork in Israel has been received at the Bahá'í World Centre. We have been asked to inform you that there is no objection in principle to Bahá'í artists making agreements with Israeli businesses on an individual basis, and not as an organized group, to sell their work in Israel. In this regard, any such artist should be sure to make sound contractual arrangements.

Regarding your query about the portrait of the Master located outside the Council Chamber of the Universal House of Justice, it was painted by the late Reza Samimi. We take this opportunity to inform you that there is a clearly established Bahá'í policy that it is not permitted to make photographs of paintings of the Master for sale or distribution.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

The First letter

is my 4 page letter to the Universal House of Justice.

The Second letter

**is the 1 page response from the
Universal House of Justice**

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2 December 2008

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Secretariat
and
Office of Public Information
Bahá'í World Centre,
Haifa, Israel

Ms. Martha Schweitz, Director
Office of Review
N.S.A. of the Bahá'ís of
United States

Regarding: Explanation for Enclosed Photo

Dearly Loved,

First, I wish to thank all you for your patience, understanding, and guidance.

Prior to your letter, I was not aware about the guidance of the Beloved Guardian in his letter of 11 July 1942*¹ prohibiting the sale of photos of paintings of the Beloved Master. Thank you for raising my consciousness. My photos of Reza Samimi's painting have been pulled from circulation.

Recently, I located and scanned the original photograph that Mr. Samimi used for his painting, which is no longer protected by International Copyright laws (as is Mr. Samimi's painting).

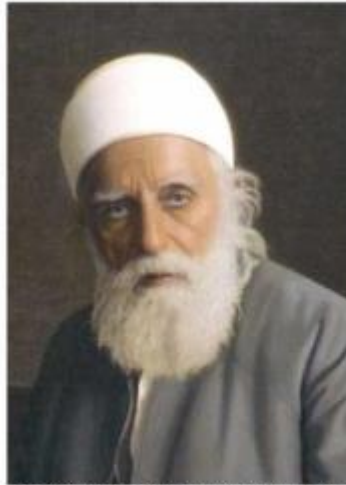


I have restored, retouched, and colorized the original photograph. I matched Mr. Samimi's brush strokes and color palette for effect, as well as adding some of my own unique techniques in retouching the general photograph to more reflect those of the Mr. Samimi's painting. To maintain the exactness of the Beloved Master's blessed **personal essence**, I matched Mr. Samimi's color palette only to the original photograph; this was done for continuity.

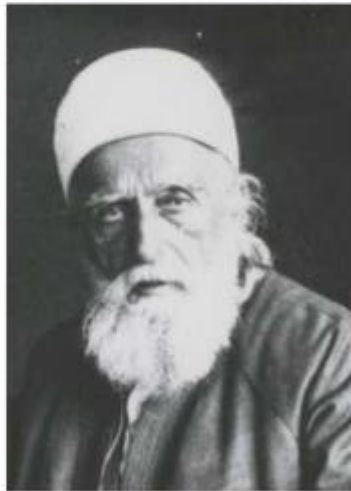
For your convenience, examples of Mr. Samimi's painting, the Original Photograph, and my restoration/colorization of the original photograph follow — side by side for comparison:



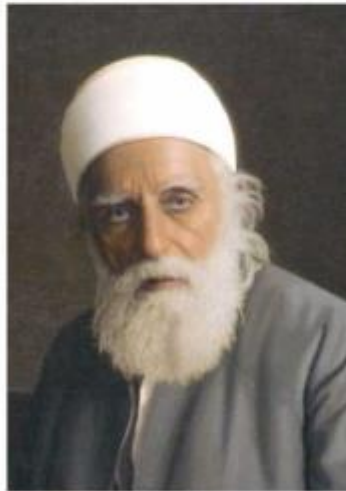
Reza Samimi's painting.



Colorized photograph by Ken Duszynski ©



Original photograph



Colorized photograph by Ken Duszynski ©

I am comfortable in feeling that I have followed the spirit of *all* of your guidance, and that of the beloved Guardian, in creating this *photographic artist's rendering*; and, that I preserved the desired "much more perfect likeness of Him" *1.



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I write this letter of explanation because, to the superficial observer, it is difficult to immediately differentiate between photos of Mr. Samimi's painting and my restoration, interpretive retouching, and colorization of the photograph apart from comparing the faces of our Beloved Master and some other subtle differences known only to me.

I am also writing because I wanted to alleviate any confusion. Believing the spirit of my photograph and artistic rendering conforms to your guidance as well as that which is referenced by our Beloved Guardian*1 regarding the sale of photographs of The Master; I will be offering this image through my

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retail outlets in Haifa, Israel also — all of whom, following the guidance in your previous letter, are well versed in the expected decorum when offering *special* images such as those of the Holy Family.

As with all my work, I pray it brings joy in the hearts of the friends. I pray this effort is worthy of acceptance at His Holy Threshold.

Warmest Bahá'í regards,
Kenneth Paul Duszynski

U.S.A. # 46073

*1 —

[T]hough he sees no objection to people having portraits of the Master in their homes, if it gives them pleasure, he prefers that for distribution and for purchase, they should confine themselves to His photographs, as these are, of course, a much more perfect likeness of Him.

Letter written on behalf of Shoghi Effendi, dated July 11, 1942, to an individual believer, in Representation of the Manifestations of God and the Master in Portraits, Photographs, and Dramatic Presentations, compiled by Universal House of Justice Research Department, 1987

THE UNIVERSAL HOUSE OF JUSTICE
DEPARTMENT OF THE SECRETARIAT

6 May 2009

Transmitted by email: kendusz@mac.com

Mr. Ken Duszynski
U.S.A.

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

Your email letter dated 12 December 2008 regarding colorization of a photograph of the Master has been received by the Office of Public Information at the Bahá'í World Centre through the Web site www.bahai.org and forwarded to our Department for response. This is a matter that should be addressed by your National Spiritual Assembly. The delay in our reply, which is due to the pressure of work at the World Centre, is regretted.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Department of the Secretariat

cc: National Assembly of the United States

NATIONAL SPIRITUAL ASSEMBLY
OF THE BAHÁ'ÍS OF THE UNITED STATES

May 18, 2009

Mr. Kenneth Paul Duszynski
745 Jonquil Terrace
Deerfield, IL 60015-4246

Dear Bahá'í Friend,

The National Spiritual Assembly appreciates your patience while we have sought the guidance of the Bahá'í World Centre regarding the colorization of photographs of 'Abdu'l-Bahá. As you know from previous correspondence, the general guidance governing the distribution of photos and portraits of the Master is that photographs may be distributed for purchase; drawings or paintings are to be distributed in a limited way and may not be sold. Photographs of paintings of the Master may not be distributed or sold.

There is no objection to the colorization of a photographic depiction of the Master—even though it would require certain decisions to be made by the individual that prepares the image—provided that the quality and extent of the coloring would not affect the dignity of the portrait nor violate the integrity of the original photograph. Given the accuracy and quality of your colorized reproduction of the original photograph on which Mr. Reza Samimi's portrait of the Master is based, this reproduction may be treated as a photograph. As a faithfully rendered colorized photograph, distribution and sale is permissible.

We wish you all the best in your creative endeavors on the frontiers of art and photography, in devotion to the Lord of all the Worlds.

With loving Bahá'í greetings,

Kenneth E. Bowers
Secretary-General