



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE  
CULTURAL HERITAGE CENTER

## Embassy of the United States of America Tashkent, Uzbekistan

### INTRODUCTION

Created by the United States Congress in 2001, the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation (AFCP) provides grants to preserve historic sites, artifacts, manuscripts and museum collections as well as traditional forms of expression such as music, dance and language. Administered by the U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs, the Ambassador's Fund has already provided nearly \$125,000 to support five significant preservation projects in Uzbekistan.

*"In our efforts to assist in preserving the heritage of other cultures, we show our respect for them."*

U.S. Congress 2001

*Friday Mosque  
interior ceiling*



## THE AMBASSADOR'S FUND FOR CULTURAL PRESERVATION

### SELECTION PROCESS

Cultural Preservation awards are based on the importance of the site, object or traditional form of expression to be preserved as well as the urgency of its preservation need. Government agencies, cultural organizations, educational institutions, NGOs and individuals can submit proposals. For each annual grant cycle, proposals must be submitted to the Embassy's Public Affairs Section. After reviewing the proposals, the Ambassador submits the most compelling ones to the State Department for final consideration. Awards are generally announced during the summer. For further information, including applications and program guidelines, please visit [www.exchanges.state.gov/culprop/afcp/](http://www.exchanges.state.gov/culprop/afcp/) and our website [uzbekistan.usembassy.gov](http://uzbekistan.usembassy.gov).



*Machiti Jome (Friday Mosque) in Bukhara*

### PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Founded in 1922, the Bukhara State Architectural and Art Museum is one of the largest open-air museums in Uzbekistan. The numerous components of the complex trace the different stages of the history of Bukhara and the Bukhara oasis. The buildings that make up the museum include some of the greatest examples of Uzbek architecture. The 18th-century Machiti Jome (Friday Mosque) is one of these historical monuments which was built under the Djaniyd Dynasty (1680-1702) during Subkhan Kuli Khan's rule.

This year the AFCP is helping the mosque to restore the wall paintings and artwork on the interior ceilings, which demonstrate the rich history of Uzbek painting. The AFCP will also set up a new climate control system to permanently house and prolong the life of the mosque's collection of manuscripts and Korans. The mosque will be open to the public to visit and view the unique Koran collection that it houses year-round.

Pottery has long played a significant role in Uzbekistan as both a vehicle for artistic and technological expression as well as an item of commerce. Yet from region to region and century to century, decorative styles and manufacturing



techniques have changed. Sometimes over the ages, the secrets of a particular glaze or the proper tem-



## RECREATING SECRETS FROM THE PAST

perature for firing a certain type of clay have been lost. Akbar Rakhimov and his son Alisher are trying to preserve this rich history of Uzbek pottery, recreating ancient techniques, utilizing traditional glazes and materials, and adopting and adapting time-honored decorative styles.

Recently, the Rakhimovs – two more generations in a long line of Uzbek master potters – opened a school in Tashkent to share their techniques with students and masters alike. They used their 2004 Ambassador's Cultural Preservation Fund grant to help equip their state-of-the-art workshops.

Samarkand's Cultural History Museum houses one of the most important collections of Central Asian arts, artifacts and manuscripts in the world. Among its treasures are



some 20 Korans. Dating from the 11th to the 20th century, the Korans are tangible

reminders of the artistic heights reached during the great flowering of Islamic culture in Central Asia.

The Museum not only wanted to preserve these ancient texts, it wanted to make sure that visitors had the opportunity to admire their fine bindings and impressive calligraphy and decoration. It was able to accomplish both goals with a AFCP grant awarded in 2002. Part of the grant was used to conserve the texts; part was used to construct special climate controlled exhibition stands to house the books, and part was used to update documentary materials.

## PRESERVING KORANS

### CONSERVATION TAMARA KHANUM MUSEUM'S COLLECTION

The Tamara Khanum House Museum features a collection of unique historical items, including gifts that Tamara Khanum received from many Heads of States, dance costumes from almost 70 countries, and hundreds of photos and audiovisual recordings of the famous dancer. Although Tamara Khanum never ceased to amaze audiences during the more than fifty years that she performed, the museum that tells the story of her life had lost some of its luster over the years as its unchanging exhibition grew stale and uninteresting for repeat visitors. Winning the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation grant has given the museum caretakers a chance to breathe new life into the museum and its rich collection of artifacts that document the life of this pioneering dancer.